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LEADERSHIP IN INNOVATION, CONSERVATION AND STABILITY

Maverick

HEWES

PATHFINDER

COBIA

1985

Maverick Boat Company, Inc formed with the purchase of an 18 foot flats boat mold by Scott and Troy Deal.



1986

First Maverick Owner's Tournament held at Flamingo, FL and held every year since on the last Thursday of September in Islamorada.



1987

Starts a long history of boat donations to CCA Florida with a contribution of a Maverick 18 to the FCA and becomes the first boat sponsor to join the conservation effort.



1988

Purchases Hewes Boats, "The Boat That Invented the Sport", solidifying the top spot in the flats boat business still held today.



1991

Develops the Maverick Mirage, the first boat ever designed specifically for noiseless poling and coins the term "Technical Poling Skiff".



1992

Men's Journal Votes the Hewes Redfisher one of the "85 perfect things".



1994

Donates a Hewes Redfisher to FCA, (now CCA) raising funds in the effort to gain over 540,000 signatures to help pass the "Net Ban" amendment banning gill nets in Florida waters.



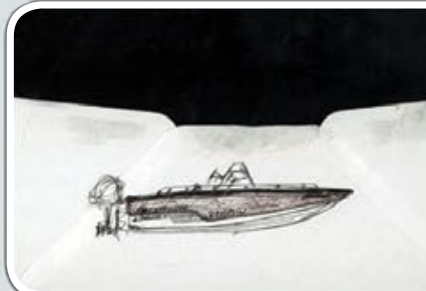
1996

Launches the first ever flats boat featuring a full tunnel in Houston, Texas.



1998

Pathfinder bay boats start on the back of an envelop and launch the "Bay Boat Revolution" forever changing inshore fishing.



2001

Maverick introduces VARIS (Vacuum Assisted Resin Infusion System) becoming first fishing boat builder to production build complete boats using infusion.





2002

Introduces the remake of the Hewes Redfisher.



2005

Cobia Boats purchased from Yamaha Motor Corporation.



2006

Scott Deal named first recipient of CCA of Florida Lifetime Achievement Award.

2007

Complete Cobia model line-up revamp starts with introduction of new 21 Bay and 256 CC.



2009

New Maverick 18 HPX introduced, eventually becoming top selling technical poling skiff model on the market.

2011

Pathfinder sets new bay boat running performance standard with the introduction of the 2300 HPS (Eventual winner of 2014 IFA Redfish Championship).



2012

Hewes brand celebrates 60 years with new designs for the iconic Redfisher 16 and 18 models.



2013

Maverick launches the revolutionary 17 HPX-S which scores 4 top three tournament finishes in first 6 months.



2014

Scott Deal wins Eddie Smith Conservation Award and works with Congress as co-chair of the Morris Deal Commission to establish guidelines for national recreational fisheries.



2014

Cobia 296 CC becomes top selling 30 footer in the country and Cobia launches its flagship, the 344 CC.



2015

29th straight year participating at Miami Boat Show produces record sales at 2015 show.



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Contents

MAY
2015

VOL 30
ISSUE 5

66

FEATURES

25 AMAZING FISH-FINDER FEATURES 44

Discover the Hidden Power of Your Traditional, CHIRP or Imaging Sounder

By Chris Woodward

CHANNEL ISLANDS BONANZA 50

California's Channel Islands Chain Is Rich with Angling Opportunities

By Ron Ballanti

SAILFISH SECRETS REVEALED 58

10 Top Captains Across the Globe Offer 30 Tips for Success

By Sam Hudson

X MARKS THE SPOT FOR STRIPERS 66

Punch In Isolated Wreck and Structure Waypoints to Dial In to Big Bass

By Capt. Vincent Daniello

ON THE COVER:

An Atlantic sailfish, in full-dorsal-up mode, works a baitball off Isla Mujeres, Mexico. Photo by Chris and Monique Fallows.



34



12



DEPARTMENTS

- 10 EDITORIAL
- 12 GAME PLAN
- 22 FISH FACTS
- 28 GEAR GUIDE
- 34 NEW PRODUCTS
- 38 IGFA PENDING RECORDS
- 40 SF DIGITAL
- SF BOATS**
- 76 FISHING MACHINES
- 80 FISH TRIAL
- 84 NEW BOATS & GEAR
- 86 BETTER BOATING
- 88 BOAT TIPS
- 98 LAST CAST

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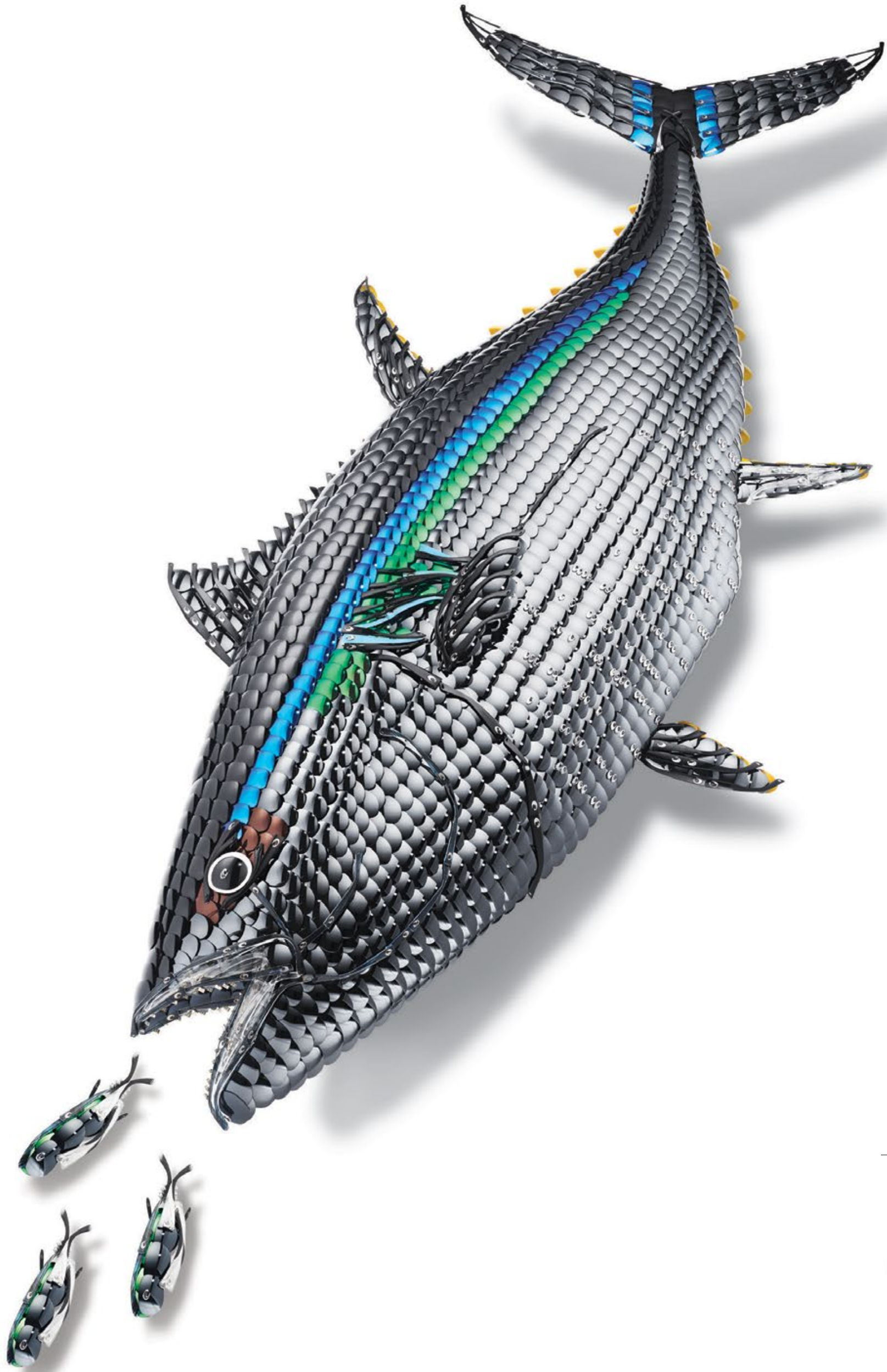
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CLIMATE CHANGE? SHHHH!

The State of Florida will no longer allow its employees to publicly use the term “hurricane.” Such words can only hurt the state’s image with visitors. “Minor rotational wind events” will be allowed.

No, Florida Gov. Rick Scott hasn’t really made such a proclamation. At least not yet. But it’s not a far cry from warning state employees to cease and desist using the term “climate change.” À la Harry Potter, it’s “the global problem that shall not be named.”

That was a mandate handed down recently to state agency officials, according to a report from the Florida Center for Investigative Reporting. Scott denies it, but there is considerable supporting evidence. The story was quickly picked up nationally, making the state once again a laughingstock.

But alleged directives of that sort are hardly surprising from a state where the money that lines politicians’ pockets has long trumped the good of the state’s environment. The powerful sugar industry, which for decades has been allowed to corrupt the flow and quality of water moving south into the unique and degraded Everglades, appreciates that. So too do anglers who fish the once bountifully thriving Indian River Lagoon on the east coast, where water quality has continued to deteriorate to the point that in some areas swimming is forbidden, sea grasses have mostly disappeared, and manatees and sea birds are turning up dead.

Florida journalist Rick Sanchez pointed out that politicians like Scott are looking out less for the environment (or the state’s fisheries) and more for big oil. Why? Money talks. Consider just the oil-money contributions to federal candidates in 2012, as Sanchez notes: nearly \$14 million from Koch Industries; \$12,650,000 from Exxon Mobile; and just a bit under \$10 million each from several other oil companies.

While avoiding the term “climate change” might make oil interests, among others, happy, it will help neither the state (or the world) avoid the very well-established scientific reality that it’s happening nor the problems that it’s bringing with it.

Hopefully this mindset won’t extend to fisheries scientists anytime soon. In fact, they’re already

trying to model scenarios to predict and react to the widespread movement of fish stocks in response to ocean warming.

Uh-oh — did I break any new Florida laws by referencing “ocean warming”? Perhaps, but even if we sweep that term, along with “climate change,” under the rug, the fact is that the oceans *are* heating up. That is well documented and beyond dispute, with ocean sea-surface temperatures hitting unprecedented highs in some areas.

In coming decades, it’s almost certain that the sport of fishing and its attendant industries will be affected, though no one can predict how. We’re already seeing some results of ocean warming with heretofore more tropical game fish once rare or nonexistent off California now being taken in numbers. Good for fishermen, short term. But NOAA has just released a report revealing losses in ocean productivity off the West Coast specifically due to Pacific Ocean warming. Not so good for fishermen, long term. On the East Coast, fish are on the move; for example, black sea bass are showing up as far north as Maine.

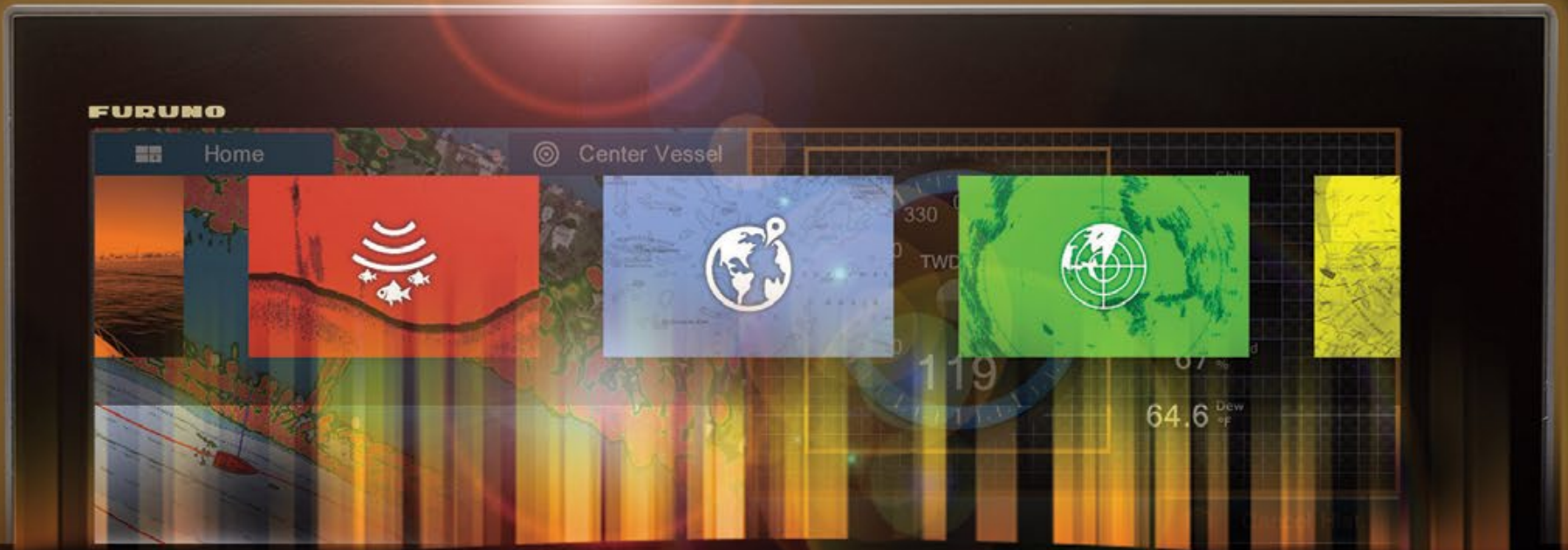
Some years down the road, many anglers may be fishing for species new to them, while some of their traditional faves may have moved farther north and/or into deeper waters. Those who fish tropical waters may redirect efforts northward, as hotter waters result in declining productivity and reef degradation.

Scientists are making an effort to track the changing distribution of fish populations. A recent study documented more than 350 species of fish and invertebrates on the move around our coasts.

In fishing, as in so many facets of our lives, we face a sea of “ifs” and “maybes” when it comes to our changing climate. We can be aware and try to adjust to the ongoing climate change (pardon my language). Or, like some politicians, we can put our heads in the sand now — and leave the ramifications of climate change for our children and grandchildren to deal with, when it will no longer be our problem.

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GAME PLAN



BY SAM HUDSON / MAY 2015 / VOL 30 — ISSUE 5



FRESH INNOVATIONS:

Don't lump spinnerbaits as freshwater lures only; inshore fish such as red drum go head over caudal fin for the baits.

THE SECRET OF SPIN

SPINNERBAITS: NOT JUST FOR BASS ANGLERS

IS IT POSSIBLE TO COMPLETE an inshore slam with just a single lure? Not any lure, but one that's been used in mostly fresh water for decades? Years ago, that question crept into my young brain as I tossed spinnerbaits in a sawgrass-lined creek near my Florida home. With light braid and the weight of a blade or two, I cast it a mile, even if it did flail in the wind at times. Every once in awhile I'd catch a black-backed largemouth bass or bowfin, but even more often, greedy juvenile redfish or snook would ravage the bait.

My first thought was that I'd stumbled on a glitch in the fishing matrix, using a lure designed for one species to catch entirely different types of fish. Years later, I watched anglers in a Louisiana Bassmaster tournament release countless redfish while trying to target largemouths. That's when I knew my spinnerbait experience wasn't an outlier.



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Spinnerbaits, baitcasters and off-color waters offer a successful trifecta for anglers fishing in brackish marshes. The baitcasters are popular crossover reels in fresh and salt. Right, this redfish pounced on an in-line spinner.

“

SPINNERBAITS ARE VERY EFFECTIVE IN WINDY OR COLD-WATER SITUATIONS. THEY CAN BE FISHED Laterally across shallow flats, or vertically through the water column in canals, creeks or along channel edges.

Today, you don't have to use bass-designed spinnerbaits for salt water; they're such productive lures in the salty shallows that numerous manufacturers like Hildebrandt, Egret Baits, Aqua Dream, Z-man, Strike King and Slayer Inc. all produce beefed-up saltwater versions.

“Spinnerbaits are very effective in windy or cold-water situations,” says Bernie Schultz, pro bass angler and designer of the Drum Roller spinnerbait. “They can be fished laterally across shallow flats, or vertically through the water column in canals, creeks or along channel edges. The added vibration and flash help call fish from a distance.”

I spoke with different captains and tournament anglers in the Southeast to pinpoint the best conditions to utilize



these baits. As I found out, an inshore slam in a single day is a definite possibility, and that includes seatrout, redfish, flounder and snook.

PRIME TARGET: REDFISH

Many freshwater spinnerbaits integrate wire molded directly into the head; that's

a weak point in salt water. To counter, most salty spinnerbaits use thicker-gauge wire and connect a clip to a jig-head eye. Still, all high-caliber saltwater spinnerbaits are designed to withstand large predators such as redfish. In fact, reds are probably the number-one inshore species targeted with spinnerbaits.

One captain who regularly catches bulls in Florida's



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east-coast estuaries is Mike Hakala, based in New Smyrna Beach. Hakala's Aqua Dream Living lures offer both a standard Cajun Slam spinnerbait and an in-line Strait Runner. These baits come in handy when all-too-regular winds blow out the shallow waters of Hakala's Indian River Lagoon.

"A slow retrieve draws strikes when the water is dirty and visibility is poor," he says. "I like the willow blade for its superior flash and the Colorado for its vibration."

Before Hakala ever named his spinnerbait the Cajun Slam, he tested a prototype with Capt. C.A. Richardson in



SALTWATER STRONG:

THE Z-MAN DIEZEL SPIN IS UNIQUE, WITH A WRAPPED THICK-GAUGE WIRE TO THE LINE TIE AND JIG EYE.

Louisiana. That day, he landed a redfish, trout, flounder and black drum in a single trip, so the name stuck. It also proved the feasibility of an inshore slam.

JIG A BLADE FOR FLOUNDER

Egret Baits pro staffer Brian "Freddy" Frederick recognizes just how versatile spinnerbaits are when he fishes tournaments in Texas and Louisiana,



Flounder are suckers for spinnerbaits. Slow-roll a spinnerbait near bottom structure, at times jiggling the bait on and off the bottom like a soft plastic.

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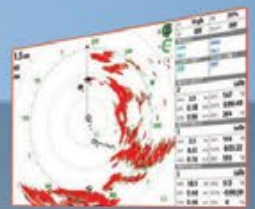
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GAME PLAN

MAY 2015 / VOL 30 — ISSUE 5



particularly in the Sabine Lake area.

“You can burn it along the surface or slow-roll it in waters to 20 feet along a jetty or deep channel,” says Frederick, utilizing bass-fishing lingo.

Besides redfish and speckled seatrout, Frederick specifically targets flounder with a spinnerbait when fishing in rocky areas. “One particular area I fish, near an industrial park, is shaped like a box; if I try to cast a lead-head jig, it’ll just get hung up,” he says. “But the flounder are in that area, so I’ll cast a spinnerbait, allowing it to flutter. I’ll let the bait reach the bottom, and I’ll jig on and off the bottom slowly; the flounder smash it.”

He casts a standard Colorado blade with an Egret Bait’s Wedgetail,

These anglers cast spinnerbaits near oyster bars. The blade’s spinning motion and configuration block the upturned hook from most snags.

preferring a medium-heavy Duce rod and Lew’s baitcaster. The bait does surprisingly well at not catching on structure. “Plus, it has flash as attraction, like a spoon, but also the vibration of soft plastic,” he says, “making it perfect for the dark waters I fish.”

TAKE SEATROUT FOR A SPIN

From late summer to November, high flood tides in Jacksonville and St. Augustine allow Capt. Tommy

SURPRISE SNOOK

Capt. Greg Tunison doesn’t expect to catch snook when he throws spinnerbaits for redfish in southwest Florida’s Pine Island area, but when snook do hit, they cream the baits with killer strikes.

“If I left my other lures at home and were allowed only one spinnerbait to fish for snook in winter, it would be a white-skirt, single-gold, Colorado-blade bait,” he says. “I would fish a slow, straight retrieve along the bottom around bridges, large dock structures and deep, rocky canal edges at night.”

Spinnerbaits are great at catching redfish and flounder, but the vibrating bladed baits attract snook bites too.

“Add a trailer hook with a plastic curly tail for short strikes and more vibration at night,” he adds. “Make sure to use 60- to 80-pound fluorocarbon leader around heavy structure for serious snook and possible bonus tarpon.”

In the hot-water months, Tunison drops down to a ¼- to ⅜-ounce bait with a single, gold willow blade and white Mylar skirt to cast along mangrove shorelines.

“Get into bass mode,” he says, “and use a baitcaster for the accuracy necessary to get back under the sticks.”



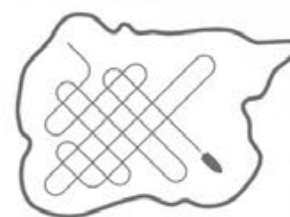
DAVID BROWN (TOP), ADRIAN E. GRAY (BOTTOM)



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Derringer to sight-fish in expansive spartina-grass marshes. Perhaps surprisingly, Derringer often throws in-line spinnerbaits to catch reds, flounder and even seatrout.

"Baitfish and local marsh crabs are thick in the grass, so that's what the in-line spinner is imitating," says Derringer, a Slayer Inc. pro staffer. "It's an easy bait to use; it's incredibly weedless; and when fish hit it, they really thump it."



Seatrout thump spinnerbaits. A Colorado blade, pictured, throws more vibration than a slim willow-leaf blade.

When the tides aren't as high, Derringer sticks to the spartina edges. Colorado blades throw more vibration than slender willow leaves — increasing drag and elevating in the water column — allowing 1/4-ounce baits to run surprisingly shallow. Derringer garnishes his spinnerbait with a Sinister Swim Tail, opting for 20-pound baitcasting gear.

"On those not-so-high tides, cast a couple of feet into the grass and reel a steady retrieve back to the boat," he says. "That's when I catch a high number of seatrout. The R-bend spinnerbait with a jig head and open hook might hook fish a little easier, but I've never truly noticed a difference compared to in-line spinners."

No matter what state the expert is from, I've noticed definite similarities among spinnerbait fishermen: 1) Baitcasting gear is a top choice because of its accuracy; 2) salt anglers casting spinnerbaits are often bass fishermen too; and 3) prime casting waters are those with mud bottoms or dark-colored water. Inshore anglers can learn a thing or two from our bass bros. 🎣

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GAME PLAN **FISH FACTS** GEAR GUIDE NEW PRODUCTS

FISH FACTS

BY DOUG OLANDER / MAY 2015 / VOL 30 — ISSUE 5



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INSIDE:



FUSILIER
24



FLUKE
24



FLAG
27

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SF FISH FACTS EXPERTS

NORTHEAST

Mike Fahay,

Sandy Hook Marine Lab,
New Jersey

SOUTHEAST

Ray Waldner, Ph.D.,

Palm Beach Atlantic
University, Florida

GULF OF MEXICO

Bob Shipp, Ph.D.,

University of South
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WEST COAST

Milton Love, Ph.D.,

UCSB,
lovelab.id.ucsb.edu

FAR PACIFIC

Ben Diggles, Ph.D.,

Queensland, Australia,
digsfish.com

BLUE-WATER PELAGICS

Eric Prince, Ph.D.,

courtesy of NOAA
Fisheries Lab, Miami

JUST SO WE'RE CLEAR: THAT'S A FUSILIER

Q My wife, Lek, caught this lovely fish near Thailand's Koh Kut Island. What is it? Is it common? I'm also wondering if it gets large and if it's considered good eating. We saw some very big schools of them in the clear waters.

Jean-Francois Helias

Bangkok, Thailand

A That's a yellow-and-blueback fusilier (*Caesio teres*), also known as the blue fusilier. They're one of the largest members of the family Caesionidae (fusiliers), growing to around 18 inches long. This species is relatively common, occurring in large schools over coral reefs throughout the tropical Indo-Pacific from eastern Africa to the Line Islands, as far north as Japan and as far south as the Great Barrier Reef off Australia. Yellow-and-blueback fusiliers very closely resemble several other fusilier species but can be distinguished from them by the fact that the yellow band encompasses the tail and most (but not all) of the dorsal surface from the dorsal fin back. The yellowback fusilier occurs in the same region, but its yellow coloration extends over the entire back and all the way to the head. Another closely related species, the redbelly yellowtail fusilier, is the largest of the family, growing to around 24 inches. However, its yellow coloration doesn't usually extend the full length of the dorsal fin.

Fusiliers were, until recently, thought to be members of the snapper family (Lutjanidae) but are now considered to be sufficiently different to deserve their own family status. Given their similarity to snappers, it's not surprising that fusiliers are considered to be pretty good to eat. Yellow-and-blueback fusiliers feed mainly on zooplankton in midwater but can occasionally be tempted into eating small baits, particularly when these are well presented in a burley (chum) trail. — **Ben Diggles**



Yellow-and-blueback fusilier



Summer flounder

A RIGHT STRANGE FLUKE

Q While fishing off the coast of Cape May, New Jersey, my friend Joe caught this fluke, which I believe to be right-handed, in contrast to the usual left-handed configuration. Joe and I have caught thousands of fluke; we've never seen one like this. I have heard that this configuration was possible (and even heard of fluke with their eyes and mouth on the white side), but in 30 years of fluke fishing, I've never seen one. I would appreciate your comments. (The right-handed fluke is the lower one in the photo.)

Capt. Harvey Yenkinson

Vetcraft Sportfishing
Cape May, New Jersey

A I'm with you, captain: As a fisheries biologist, I've spent many hours examining developing summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*) in their larval and juvenile stages. I've also looked at thousands of specimens. And I have never seen one reversed — that is, with the eyes on the right side of the head. I might also add that colleagues who worked on older stages (adult fish) in New Jersey waters have also never encountered one that was reversed. So I would have to conclude that the condition in this species is extremely rare. Reversal of the normal "eyed" side is not rare in all flatfish. The California Halibut (*Paralichthys californicus* — the same genus as fluke), for instance, might be either right- or left-handed; I noted on the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife website that 40 percent of California halibut are right-handed. The Pacific halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*) is in an entirely different family than flukes, and they always have their eyes on the right side. — **Mike Fahay**

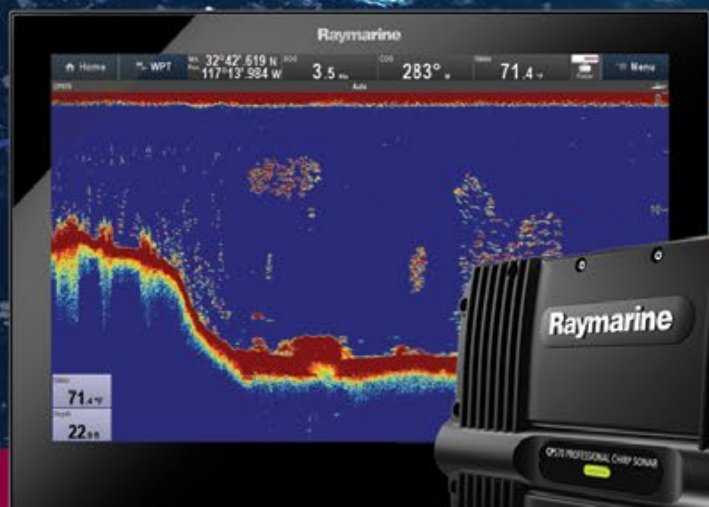
NORTHERN RECORD FOR THE PECULIAR LOUVAR

Q This fish was seen swimming off the north coast of Graham Island in British Columbia's salmon-rich archipelago of Haida Gwaii (formerly called the Queen Charlotte Islands). It

Images for illustrative purpose only.

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was captured by Stan Hansen (pictured) when it washed to shore in the surf. I believe it's a louvar, but that species' range is well south of here (we're within sight of the Alaskan panhandle). I'm not a biologist, but as a lifelong fisherman and charter guide, I have a keen interest in marine life. I've seen mola mola on a few occasions, including this summer. Albacore are now becoming a realistic target for Haida Gwaii salmon fishermen, with the tuna taken within 5 miles of our coast in the warm currents in late summer. I'm curious to know if these occurrences are anomalies or indicate a trend or shift in ocean conditions.

Darrell Oike

Tlell, British Columbia, Canada

A That fish is, indeed, the louvar, *Luvarus imperialis*. These are pelagic, motile fishes found throughout the world in tropical and temperate waters. Despite feeding primarily on jellyfish and other gelatinous creatures, louvars grow to at



least 6.5 feet long, the heaviest — taken off California — weighing 305 pounds. Louvar are reported to be fine eating, with meat reminiscent of tuna.

Along the West Coast of North America, they are more or less predictably taken by swordfish and tuna commercial fishermen as far north as Southern California. This catch represents a considerable northward geographic-range extension of at least 500 miles (from Washington state) and offers more evidence that the Pacific

Ocean off North America in 2014 was just too damned warm, with a variety of tropical or subtropical fishes (such as wahoo, blue marlin, slender sunfish and hammerhead sharks) making their way north into U.S. (and, here, Canadian) waters. — **Milton Love**

I.D. HITS THE NAIL ON THE (SHORT) HEAD

Q This appears to be some type of drum, but the mouth isn't like any I've seen on a drum or croaker. What is this?

Capt. Omar Orraca

Puerto Rico

A I lived in southwestern Puerto Rico for five years while enrolled in a graduate marine biology program but never encountered this species. However, I was concentrating on coral-reef fishes, while this species frequents coastal areas with soft bottoms, out to depths of nearly 200 feet. It's a shorthead drum, *Larimus*

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Shorthead drum

breviceps, which occurs throughout the Greater and Lesser Antilles and from Costa Rica to Rio de Janeiro. Although a small fish, reaching a maximum length of just over a foot, in some areas shorthead drum occur in sufficient numbers to be commercially important, with larger specimens being marketed and smaller individuals used as bait. A similar species — the banded drum, *L. fasciatus* — occurs along much of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States but can be distinguished from the shorthead drum by the distinct dark bars along the banded's back as well as its geographical range. — **Ray Waldner**

HE BAGGED A FLAG

Q While deep-dropping off the coast of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, in 800 feet of water, I caught this odd-looking fish, along with the yellow-eyed red snapper I usually catch in those waters. I've been fishing here for more than eight years, but I've never come across anything similar. Even local fishermen, some of them with more than 40 years' experience, have never seen anything like it. Can you identify it for me?

Jacques Landry

Aguada, Puerto Rico

A Your catch is a Spanish flag, *Gonioplectrus hispanus*, Jacques. A member of the sea bass/grouper family (Serranidae), it reaches a maximum length of around 12 inches. It inhabits rocks and ledges at depths from 100 to 1,200 feet, where it feeds on small fishes and crustaceans. The Spanish flag is a nonaggregating species; individuals



Spanish flag

live solitary lives, except when mating. The Spanish flag has been reported from North Carolina (as post-larvae) south along the coast of Brazil, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. Although it lacks value as a commercial food fish due to its small size and relatively low abundance, it has been suggested that the Spanish flag could be an interesting addition to the marine-aquarium trade. — **Ray Waldner** 🐟

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GAME PLAN

FISH FACTS

GEAR GUIDE

NEW PRODUCTS

GEAR GUIDE

BY SAM HUDSON / MAY 2015 / VOL 30 — ISSUE 5



A pile of distinctly designed worm hooks present anglers with plenty of rigging choices for soft baits.

NOT YOUR ORDINARY WORM HOOK

NEW HOOK BREEDS ALLOW FOR INNOVATIVE SOFT-BAIT RIGGING

IT'S HIGH TIME to reconsider the worm hook. Plenty more options exist than the round-bend, long-shanked hook with a stair-step below the eye. Hooks today are manufactured for specific bait molds and fishing techniques, not the other way around. Plus they're built with high-strength material like high-carbon steel, points out VMC's Dan Quinn.

Worm hooks should really be called soft-bait hooks, and the newest trends from manufacturers reflect the transformation. "Anglers want wide-gap styles," says Eagle Claw Trokar's category manager Matt Gray, "as angling techniques steer toward larger and more-robust soft plastics. Unique keepers affixed to the hook also help prolong a bait's life."

A hook point's sharpness is vital. "Watch out for hooks with points that 'roll' very easily," explains Mustad's Steve Tagami. "That means there's not enough metal at the hook point to hold up under pressure. Your effectiveness goes way down if the point is ruined."

Hook designs are as varied as the fish species they can target. Here, *Gear Guide* highlights innovative saltwater hooks from numerous manufacturers. You might find a couple of new favorites to replace the old standbys.

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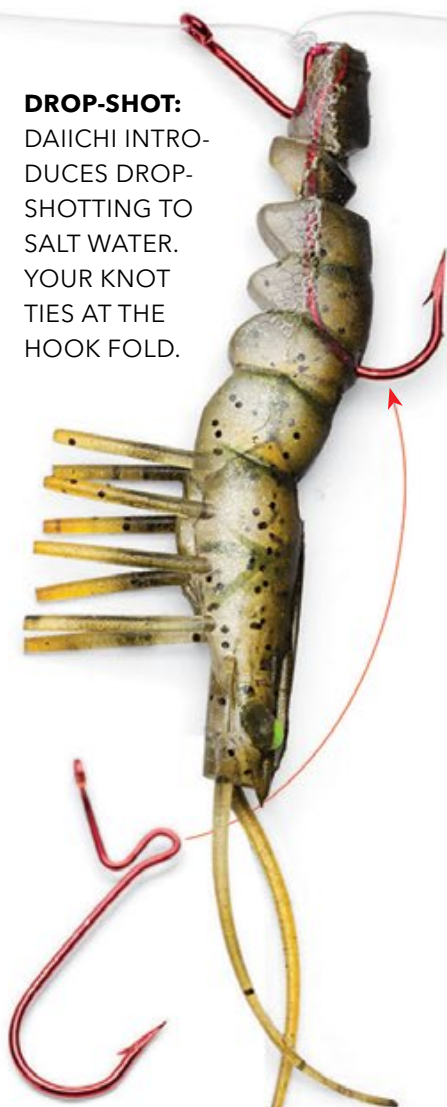
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DAIICHI SHRIMP SHAKER

SIZES: 1 to 2/0

PRICE: \$4, four per pack

HIGHLIGHT: Double-eye hook allows drop-shot tactics in salt water.

RUNDOWN: Daiichi's Shrimp Shaker is a high-carbon fine-wire hook built with Forged Needle Point Technology to prevent point rollover. Inspired by success from fresh water, anglers can drop-shot artificial shrimp into potholes with this hook. The Shrimp Shaker's double-eye is easy to rig — tie a knot such as the palomar to the top eye, and run the tag end through the second eye, securing the tag with a small weight. Available in black nickel and red Bleeding Bait finishes.

TUBE KEEPER: EAGLE CLAW'S HP KAHLE HOOK USES A SNAP-BACK KEEPER TO HOLD SOFT BAITS TO THE HOOK EYE.



EAGLE CLAW LAZER SHARP HP HOOK

SIZES: 2/0 to 4/0

PRICE: \$5.50, six per pack

HIGHLIGHT: The kahle hook features a unique keeper for tube baits.

RUNDOWN: Popularized for rigging tubes, Eagle Claw Lazer Sharp's HP is a forged-steel kahle hook with a unique S clip to hold soft baits at the eye of the hook. The keeper is attached directly to the hook eye. Because of its kahle-hook shape, rigging a soft bait requires an entry point at an angle to the head instead of a straight-on puncture. Experiment with any smaller soft plastic that doesn't need weight, or can be rigged with the weight farther up the leader.



GAMAKATSU NAUTILUS LIGHT

SIZES: 2 to 8/0

PRICE: \$4, six per pack

HIGHLIGHT: Use this light-wire circle hook to nose-hook soft baits.

RUNDOWN: Gamakatsu's Nautilus Light isn't a typical worm hook, but anglers have figured out that nose-hooking soft baits with 2/0 and 3/0 hooks offers better action in the water. This is not the bait to throw in cover; use it if you want a high hookup ratio in open water. Plus fish tend not to swallow the hook. The Gamakatsu light-wire hook was developed for fishing fragile baits and built from forged high-carbon steel, an ideal combo for soft baits such as paddle tails.



HOGY BARBARIAN SWIMBAIT HOOK 3X WEIGHTED

WEIGHT: 1/2 and 1 ounces

SIZES: 10/0 to 12/0

PRICE: \$4, one per pack

HIGHLIGHT: The sickle-shape hook bend with weight forward handles 14-inch baits.

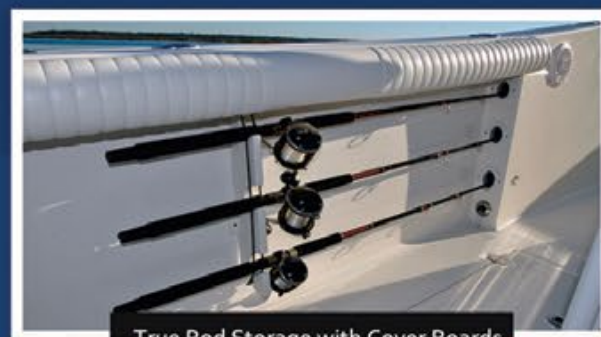
RUNDOWN: Hogy's Barbarian Swimbait is a 3x-strong VMC sickle-shape hook meant to handle 12- to 18-inch Hogy baits. The hook bend's V shape locks fish close to the shank and prevents hook straightening. A forward weight and screw-style keeper at the hook eye allow for a secure connection to make longer casts. This hook is geared for tough fish such as stripers and tuna.

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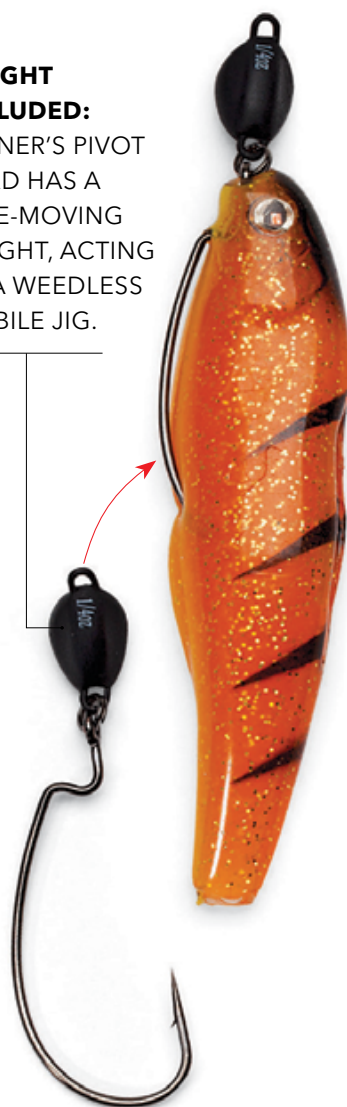
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MUSTAD WEIGHTED KVD GRIP-PIN

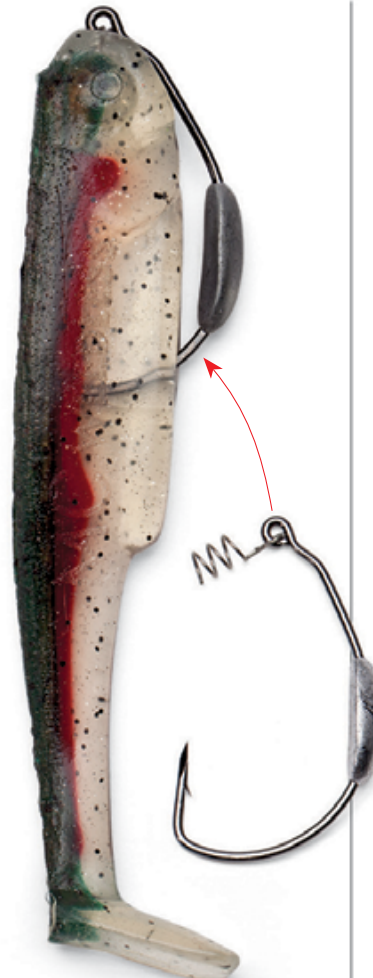
WEIGHT: 1/16, 1/8 and 3/8 ounces
SIZES: 3/0 to 6/0
PRICE: \$6, three per pack
HIGHLIGHT: The Grip-Pin and weight on hook shank are encased in polymer coating.
RUNDOWN: The Weighted Grip-Pin is an expansion of Mustad's popular Grip-Pin series. All Grip-Pin hooks feature Mustad's 4.3 Micro Sharp Point Technology and keeper barb near the hook eye, but this hook also incorporates a belly weight system. The entire hook shank is encased in a slim, polymer coating for a streamlined shell. The weighted Grip-Pin is an ideal hook to pop-and-pause jerkbaits on the retrieve.

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OWNER ULTRAHEAD PIVOT HEAD

WEIGHT: 1/8, 1/4 and 3/8 ounces
SIZES: 3/0 to 5/0
PRICE: \$7, two per pack
HIGHLIGHT: A bean-shape weighted head and split ring attach to the hook eye.
RUNDOWN: Owner's Pivot Head design creates an erratic swim behavior in plastic baits. The hook is versatile on its own, under a popping cork or with an umbrella rig. The weighted head and split ring act like a jig head, cutting out any need for additional weight. Heads come in a black-matte finish, and hooks are black chrome. Utilize the Pivot Head by Texas-rigging swimbaits with the hook point riding up.



TROKAR MAGNUM WEIGHTED SWIMBAIT

WEIGHT: 1/8, 1/4, 3/8 and 1/2 ounces
SIZES: 3/0 to 9/0
PRICE: \$10, three per pack
HIGHLIGHT: Designed with bait keeper, wide gap and center weight for big swimbaits.
RUNDOWN: Trokar's Magnum Weighted SwimBait is a forged heavy-gauge hook with a screw-style bait keeper to handle large swimbaits for cobia, calico bass and even small tuna. The belly weight allows this bait to run deep or offset a buoyant soft bait. Trokar's surgically sharpened hook creates a triple-sided point for easy penetration through plastic into a fish jaw.



VMC X-LONG WIDE GAP

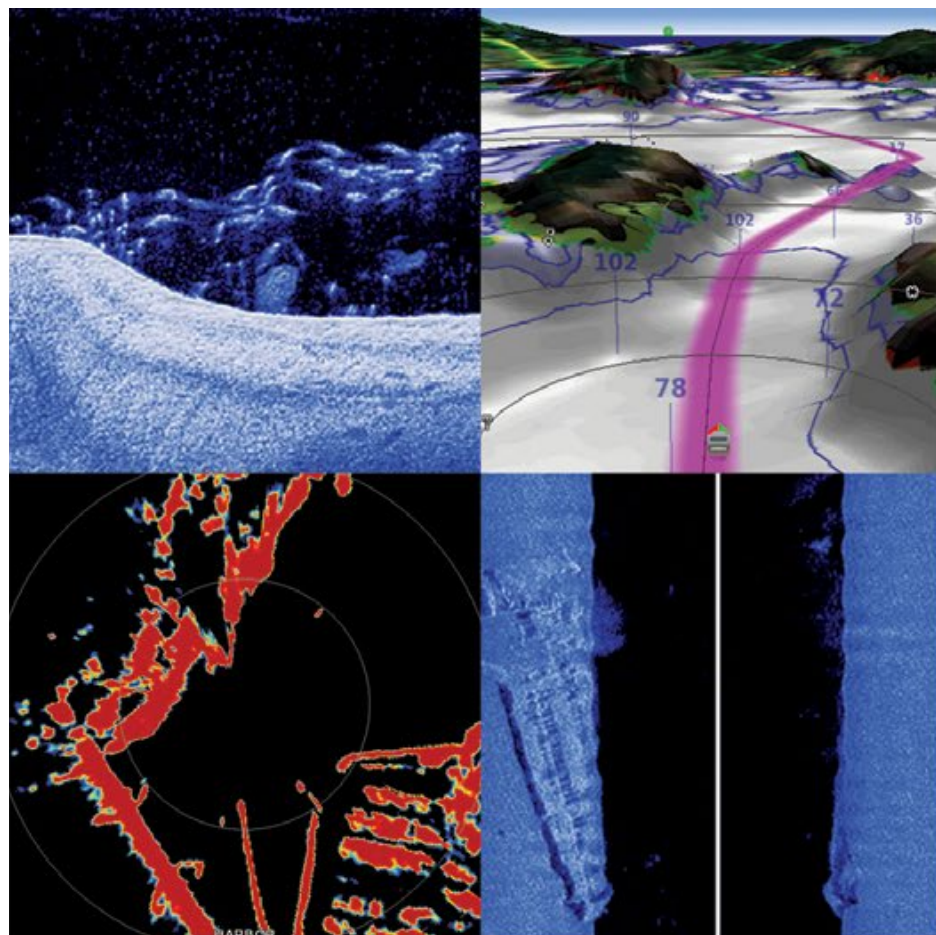
SIZES: 3/0 to 5/0
PRICE: \$4, five per pack
HIGHLIGHT: An extended Z-bend leg tapers into a wide-gap hook for fat soft baits.
RUNDOWN: VMC's X-Long Wide Gap hook doesn't incorporate weight; instead it's specifically designed for hollow-body soft plastics. Hooks are forged from vanadium steel with a black-nickel finish. The X-Long holds the soft bait to the hook with an elongated locking-bend design and microbarb near the resin-closed eye. The hook shank leads to a wide-gap gape that terminates at a 3-degree offset hook point. The wide gap allows space for bigger and wider soft baits than traditional worm hooks.



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NEW PRODUCTS

BY CHRIS WOODWARD / MAY 2015 / VOL 30 — ISSUE 5



1. REFINED TOUCH With the **TZtouch2**, Furuno has taken its next step in refining the multitouch NavNet navigation system. The new multifunction display now comes with a built-in dual-frequency fish finder and 56-channel GPS receiver. For the fish finder, Furuno has introduced RezBoost technology, which sharpens fish-target images four to eight times. To further simplify use, Furuno has refined its interface, employing easy icons and drag-and-drop convenience, and instituting an edge-swipe motion common on today's smart devices. Choose a 12.1-inch (\$3,995) or 15.6-inch (\$5,995) display.

2. COOLER COLOR Yeti now offers a springtime-edition **Seafoam Cooler** in its four most popular sizes: the Roadie 20 (14 cans/20 pounds of ice, \$249.99), and Tundra 35 (20 cans/28 pounds of ice, \$299.99), 45 (26 cans/35 pounds of ice, \$349.99) and 65 (39 cans/56 pounds of ice, \$399.99). The light-green versions of these rotomolded polyethylene coolers are UV resistant and heavily insulated; the Tundras feature double-haul handles made from military-grade nylon rope, nonslip feet and a vortex drain system. Yetis also come in white, desert tan and ice blue.



3. PACKAGE DEAL West Marine's exclusive **Blacktip Baitcaster Rod-and-Reel Combo** merges a 7-foot conventional, medium-heavy casting rod with a Shimano Corvalus CVL-400 round baitcasting reel. Rated for 15- to 25-pound-class line, the outfit suits most inshore applications. The reel holds 240 yards of 12-pound-test and features a gear ratio of 5.2-to-1 (retrieving 22 inches of line per crank). It comes with Shimano's variable brake system, three ball bearings and one roller bearing. The combo costs \$199.99.





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4. PRO SOUND Engineered for serious blue-water anglers, Raymarine's new **CP570 Professional CHIRP Sonar** (\$1,999, pictured) features the latest generation of intelligent CHIRP signal processing. The CP570 can see through dense schools of baitfish, identify thermoclines, and clearly target game fish. The black-box unit comes with improved automatic sensitivity controls and noise filtering, Raymarine's digital surface filtering, and two fully independent sonar channels with up to 4 kW of output power to deliver fast target identification. Raymarine also now offers the 2 kW **CP470** (\$1,199) and the non-CHIRP, 1 kW **CP370** Digital Sonar (\$699).

5. NEW FAVORITE Sperry has taken an angler favorite in the **Kingfisher 2** and updated it with lighter (9.7 ounces), sleeker styling, and a 50 percent reduction in shock and vibration. The enhanced ASV technology in the outsole offers improved cushioning and comfort from heel to toe. The adaptive wave siping and Hydro Grip rubber combine to deliver maximum traction and stability on wet deck surfaces. Kingfisher 2 shoes come in sizes 7 to 13 and in gray/lime or white/blue. They cost \$140.

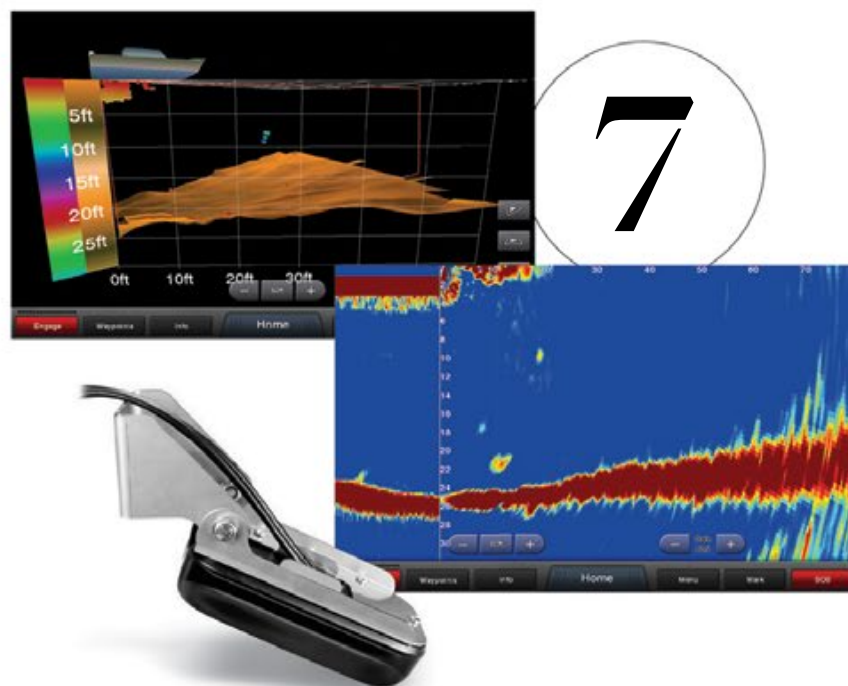


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6

6. SUPER FIBER PowerPro has debuted **Maxcuatro braided fishing line**, employing Honeywell's new high-tenacity fiber – Spectra HT – which the company says is 25 percent thinner than and twice as abrasion-resistant as previous braid. The fiber, exclusive to the PowerPro brand, allows for special processing that contributes to longer casting. Anglers can downsize their tackle and still enjoy loads of capacity for longer-running fish in saltwater applications. Maxcuatro is offered in moss green and high-viz yellow, and in 50-, 65-, 80-, and 100-pound-tests on 150-, 500-, 1,500-, and 3,000-yard spools. Prices range from \$28.99 (150 yards of 50-pound) to \$699.99 (3,000 yards of 100-pound).



7

7. SURROUND SONAR In a major announcement at February's Miami International Boat Show, **Garmin** introduced its **Panoptix All-Seeing Sonar**. This multibeam-transducer technology allows anglers to see forward, backward, sideways and down in real time; it was previously available only in the offshore commercial market. With a Panoptix Forward transducer, anglers can see the bottom, structure, even fish in front of the boat in LiveVü or RealVü 3-D modes. With a Panoptix Down transducer, the screen shows what's swimming below the boat in any direction in LiveVü, RealVü 3-D Historical or RealVü 3-D Down views. Currently, Garmin offers only transom- or trolling-motor-mount transducers. The price is \$1,499.99.



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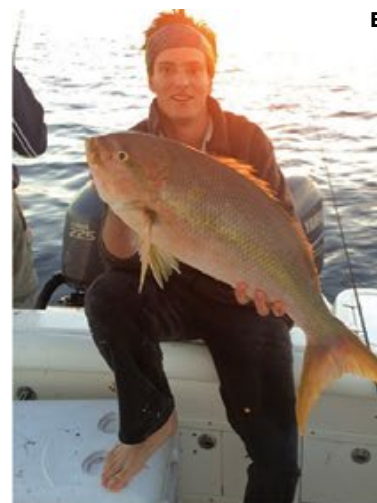
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IGFA PENDING WORLD RECORDS



▶ A beautiful **93-centimeter (36.6-inch) golden trevally [A]** caught this past December in Australia's Hervey Bay is pending as the new all-tackle length record for the species. Aussie Paul Worsteling of Mount Martha in Victoria caught the big golden while trolling a Rapala.

▶ Fishing off Naples, Florida, produced a whopping **10-pound, 3-ounce yellowtail snapper [B]** for local angler Jeff D. Bowles of Naples, this past January. He used a finger mullet for bait. If approved, it will be the new men's 20-pound line-class record, handily beating the existing 8-pound, 4-ounce fish caught in Bermuda in 2006.



▶ While bottomfishing out of Virginia Beach, Johnny Boyd of Carrolton, Virginia, came up with a surprise catch: a **5-pound, 10-ounce Carolina hake [C]**. As a first-ever entry for the species, this is pending as the all-tackle world record. A crab enticed the fish for Boyd, who fished with IGFA representative Ken Neill III.

▶ With a fork length of **32.6 inches (83 centimeters)**, this **bonefish [D]** easily qualifies for the IGFA's new Trophy Bonefish Club, which accepts length or weight. Stephen Dombaj caught the fish in New Caledonia on a mantis-shrimp-pattern fly and 20-pound tippet. (Find more information on IGFA Slam and Trophy Clubs at igfa.org.)



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JOURNEY TO A LOST WORLD TO CATCH THE PLANET'S TOUGHEST FISH

In our photo gallery at sportfishingmag.com/toughest-catch, globe-trotting sport-fishing journalist Arnout Terlouw shares an amazing fishing adventure into wild West Papua, New Guinea. There he fishes swift currents of dark waters full of trees and snags in pursuit of Papuan black bass – a powerful snapper that is incredibly difficult to land.



Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

Economic and Property Damages Settlement

The Deadline to file a Claim is June 8, 2015

June 8, 2015 has been established as the deadline to submit a claim in the Economic and Property Damages (“E&PD”) Settlement with BP Exploration & Production Inc. and BP America Production Company (“BP”) related to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. So if you are eligible to file a claim, you must act soon.

WHO IS INCLUDED?

The E&PD Settlement Class includes people, businesses, other entities, and properties in the states of Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi, and certain counties in Texas and Florida, that were harmed by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill that occurred on April 20, 2010. The website DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com has detailed descriptions and maps of the included geographic locations to help you determine whether you are a part of the E&PD Settlement Class. Additionally, you can call 1-866-992-6174 or e-mail questions@DeepwaterHorizonEconomicSettlement.com to find out if a geographic location is included.

WHAT ARE THE PAYMENT CATEGORIES?

The settlement provides payments if you had economic loss or property damage because of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. By submitting a claim, you can request a payment in one or more of the following seven categories:

- Economic Damage ■ Loss of Subsistence
 - Vessel Physical Damage
 - Real Property Sales Damage
- Vessels of Opportunity Charter Payment
 - Coastal Real Property Damage
 - Wetlands Real Property Damage

Economic Damage payments are available for Individuals and Entities that lost profits or earnings as a result of the Deepwater Horizon Incident. **Coastal Real Property** payments are available for property that was physically damaged in connection with the Deepwater Horizon Incident. Detailed descriptions of all seven categories are available at the website.

There is no limit on the total dollar amount of the E&PD Settlement. All qualified and timely claims will be paid in full once they are approved. The Settlement also allowed for Seafood Compensation claims, but the deadline for those claims has passed.

HOW DO I REQUEST A PAYMENT?

You must submit a Claim Form to request a payment. You can get a copy of the various Claim Forms by visiting the website or by calling 1-866-992-6174. Claims can be submitted online or by mail. If you have questions about how to file your claim, you should call the toll-free number for assistance. The claims process can be complex, so if you are eligible to file a claim, you should act now so you may complete your claim before the **June 8, 2015** deadline.



HISTORIC GIANT TREVALLY CAUGHT OFF PANAMA

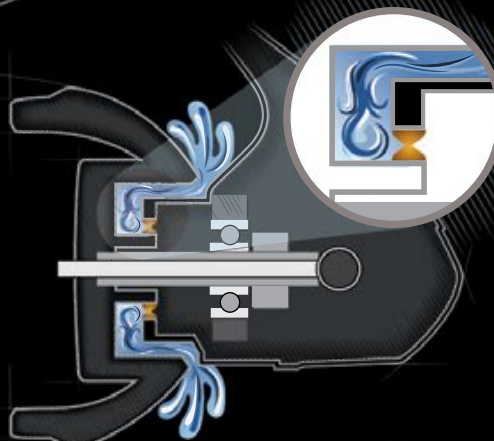
In an exclusive report to *Sport Fishing*, Panama fishing-resort manager Olivier Charpentier (pechepanama.com) shares his fish tale of the giant trevally he caught on a popper near Montuosa Island off Panama's Pacific Coast. Historically, GT have been limited to the western Pacific. sportfishingmag.com/historic-gt



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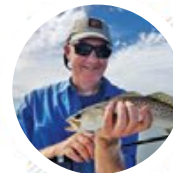
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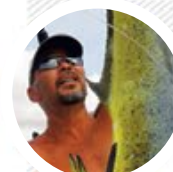
Q: What was the most heartbreaking fish you didn't land?



My first Indo-Pacific permit on St. Francois in the Seychelles. I did everything right: saw the fish on the flat before the guide and actually stopped him in his tracks before he spooked it. One cast, one strip, hookup. A nice fight for a few minutes until it was literally just at our feet, and I was imagining the photo. Then the fly came out. Argh! — **Paul Sharman**



An 8-foot thresher on light tackle. I had a skippy on, and the shark came up and swallowed it. I gave slack, and before long the shark was hooked. I fought her for almost two hours, chasing her down with the boat. Finally got her up, and she breached and spit the hook. — **Saad Fishin Soliman**



A blue marlin that went ballistic on a short corner bait. It pulled 400 yards of 130-pound-test in a minute, if that, and wore out and broke the 650-pound-test leader. Got the soft head back, as it was impaled on the snap part of swivel. I've seen lots of fish 400 to 650 pounds here in Maui, but this thing dwarfed my biggest 673-pound blue. Had to be over 900-plus pounds. — **David Ibara**



Lost a 500-plus-pound blue marlin off Edisto Banks the last day of fishing in the Bohicket Governors Cup. The biggest marlin that year was a little over 300 pounds. Had her on for more than an hour, but we were using shorter leaders than normal and paid for it big time — \$80,000 in the Calcutta alone. — **Frank Hanna**



In 1992, I hooked a salmon that came to the surface with a tail bigger than I had ever seen. It hit my 40-pound line and was gone. Two days later a friend who worked for Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife told us to visit the hatchery to see the largest salmon to come into a hatchery. My hook was still in its mouth, with two others in the tail and one in the fin. — **Larry Grimm**

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A man in a white t-shirt is shown from the side, looking down at a fish finder mounted on a boat. The fish finder has a large, curved, ribbed white display screen. A smartphone is resting on the boat's surface next to the fish finder. The background is dark, suggesting it is nighttime.

2.5

AMAZING FISH-FINDER FEATURES

*DISCOVER THE HIDDEN POWER
OF YOUR TRADITIONAL, CHIRP OR
IMAGING SOUNDER*

BY CHRIS WOODWARD

Today's sounders carry state-of-the-art computer technology. Their uses are limited only by your time.

A fisherman who avoids electronics is like an explorer who shuns maps. The fisherman rambles along, depending on real or imagined factors: his skill in reading the water, his cellphone reconnaissance and his historical perspective. But without at least a sounder, he remains relatively blind. He would gain — and potentially catch — so much more if he took a little time to learn and properly use the right tools.

Fish finders, particularly those harnessing the latest technology, give anglers a clear eye to what's underwater. New CHIRP and side- or down-imaging functions can almost take a picture of the water column around the boat. To gain better perspective on just what the best marine electronics can provide, I spoke with six manufacturers and asked them to name the coolest features they program into their fish finders. From those, I culled duplicates and selected 25; companies are listed alphabetically.

FURUNO

REZBOOST

When Furuno introduced its new NavNet TZtouch2 multifunction displays at the Miami boat show in February, the company debuted a feature called RezBoost. RezBoost is a piece of software that increases the sharpness of sonar targets four to eight times, using a regular 50/200 kHz transducer. CHIRP technology makes targets seven to nine times crisper but employs a more robust transducer, Furuno says.

"If you're retrofitting, you don't have to pull your transducer and reglass a



new [CHIRP] one" to take advantage of RezBoost, says Jeff Kauzlaric, Furuno advertising and communications manager. "So that saves on cost."

(Note that because of CHIRP's frequency sweep, it does pick up and display more targets.)

BOTTOM DISCRIMINATION

This feature — available on several FCV



and GP units, and on NavNet 3-D and NavNet TZtouch series units — breaks down the seafloor makeup into four categories: mud, sand, gravel and rock. The units analyze the hardness, or the strength, of the return to determine the probable makeup of the bottom.

Furuno says its engineers have even dropped cameras to the bottom to ground-truth, if you will, the analysis in real time. "It's good, obviously, for fishing to see what kind of bottom is below, but it's also good for anchoring," Kauzlaric says.

Bottom Discrimination works with a wide range of transducers but not all.

POST-GAIN PROCESSING

With post-gain processing, you dial in the clarity of the display so you can see more targets and eliminate clutter. Not only does it change the view going forward, but it also changes the history at the same time. That allows you to see the recent past and more closely check the ground you just covered.

"In the past, you had to wait until



the unit repainted the entire screen to see the changes. This takes the history and applies the updated gain to it," Kauzlaric says.

Post-gain processing is available on stand-alone fish finders, including the FCV 627, 587, 295 and 1150, and the GP 1670F and 1870F units.

HISTORY SCROLL BACK

This feature allows an angler to use the touch screen to scroll back through the sounder's history. Depending on the update rate you set for your sounder, you could see five to 15 minutes of adjusted history.

"This is useful if you've gone over certain structure or perhaps marked fish and want to go back to drop a mark or point on the fish-finder screen," says Kauzlaric. "That produces a mark or point on the chart plotter as well."



History Scroll Back comes on NavNet TZtouch and TZtouch2 units.

FREQUENCY SLEWING

On higher-end sounders, such as the FCV 295 and 1150, anglers can fine-tune the emitted frequency to find the sweet spot. When such a unit is paired with a 50/200 kHz transducer, for instance, you could dial that up to 52 kHz to find the clearest returns. The frequency-adjustment range can be 4 to 5 degrees or more. When the range is set during installation, it can be altered to suit your fishing needs.

In general, Furuno suggests lowering frequency to increase the target-detection range and increasing frequency to improve resolution.



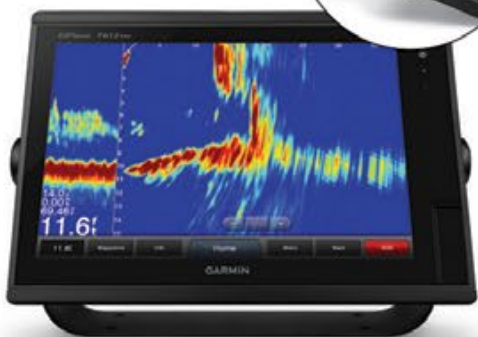
The FCV 1150 also can connect to a network and, in theory, send the same picture to other NavNet or TZtouch units on board.

GARMIN

PANOPTIX LIVEVÜ

Unlike anything on the recreational marine market, Garmin's Panoptix all-around transducers — introduced at the Miami boat show in February — use phased-array multibeam sonar and emit many more pulses than traditional sonar. With more elements in the transducer, compatible Garmin units can send and receive more data. The technology sweeps the water column. The Panoptix transducer you choose — forward or down — determines the directional cone of coverage.

The LiveVü feature shows you a live, videolike scene of where a fish is relative to the boat in real time, not where it was when you passed over it.



"Current sonar is a snapshot in time. It's history, so by the time you see it, it's old data," says David Dunn, director of sales. "LiveVü updates in real time. You see a fish swim out of the beam."

In this view, you can turn on or off echo trails to tell the difference between moving and nonmoving targets, Dunn says.

PANOPTIX REALVÜ 3-D

This feature paints a picture of the bottom in real time. Unlike with

traditional sonar, Panoptix returns that live signal even if the boat is still. If you're fishing over a wreck, for instance, Dunn says, it will update the whole time whether you're anchored or moving.



You can spin the screen you're seeing on the display a full 360 degrees to project an unlimited view of the water column. "You know where the fish is in the water column and whether it's on the port or starboard side of the boat."

FOUR-WAY VIEWING



Though this feature is not exclusive to Garmin, the ability to split the sounder screen four ways — showing traditional, DownVü, SideVü and even Panoptix all at the same time — gives anglers all the data they could possibly want about what they're seeing around the boat. Garmin's 7600 and 8000 series units provide this capability, though two transducers would be necessary.

FULL-BAND CHIRP

Garmin sources hear a lot of customers' misconceptions about CHIRP. In some cases, CHIRP is confused with side- or down-imaging sonar. In other cases, some products labeled CHIRP provide very small bandwidth frequency



ranges. Garmin CHIRP products emit signals through the entire spectrum of frequencies available (from 25 to 210 kHz), depending on the transducer.

HUMMINBIRD

SIDE-IMAGING WAYPOINTS

"When I go out, and I'm throwing baits around a bridge piling, I can mark a waypoint on my side-imaging screen that shows me which piling the tarpon might be hanging on during incoming tide or on the outgoing," says Jeff Kolodzinski, Humminbird brand manager. "Another example is you could mark all four corners of a barge."

With Humminbird's new ONIX and



ION touch-screen units, marking a waypoint is as simple as touching the screen. With other units, you move the cursor to the object and hit the mark button.

To take it one step further, you can quickly take a screen snapshot to show the depth of the tarpon or other fish on a particular tide stage.

360 MEASURING

When using Humminbird's 360 Imaging sonar product — which sweeps a full circle within its range — an angler can move the cursor on the display to a fish or to a piece of structure. Once the cursor is placed, a small window pops up to tell you exactly how far that target is from the transducer and the target's relative direction.

"Some guys are using that for cast-netting baitfish," Kolodzinski says. "It really lets you know where to cast or throw for direction and distance."



All of Humminbird's side-imaging units, the down-imaging 900 and 1100 series, and the ONIX and ION are compatible with 360 Imaging.

AUTOCHART LIVE

This feature allows you to capture and record live, real-time sonar readings. Rather than depend on depth numbers and contour lines on dated electronic charts, you can create your own detailed view of the bottom at a favorite fishing hot spot — and keep it all to yourself if you'd like.

Even subtle changes that evolve



during a season can be recorded and used, including slight depressions or humps formed by shifting sand. When you start to record the sonar track, you can watch the display create the map or let it run in the background.

Eight hours of recording can be saved to the unit's hard drive. If you plan to keep more locations, purchase a ZeroLines SD card for \$110. If you choose, you can share the SD card with a friend — or not. AutoChart Live is available on ONIX and ION units.

I-PILOT LINK INTERFACE

Once you have the detailed contours of your fishing site mapped out with AutoChart Live, you can use i-Pilot Link to stay in a selected depth, follow an oyster reef or work a channel edge with a Minn Kota trolling motor.

"Want to catch redfish in 6 feet of water while you hold in 10 feet? You tell your sonar computer, 'Keep me in 10 feet of water,' and it just keeps you at that depth all around that contour," says Kolodzinski. "It gives you incredible



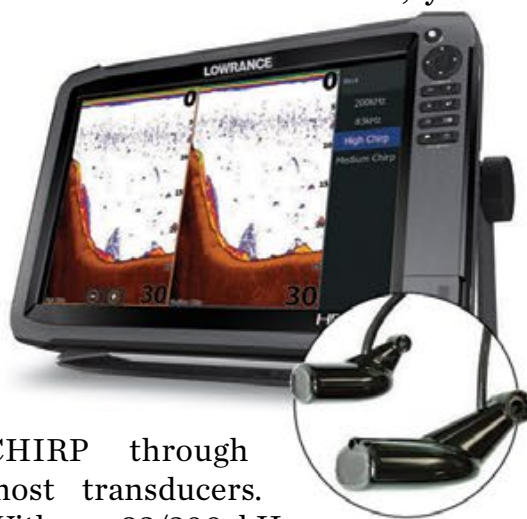
boat control. It's like having a chauffeur."

This feature is available on all Humminbird multifunction displays that have Ethernet capability.

LOWRANCE

CHIRP SELECTABILITY

With Lowrance's HDS Gen3, you can



CHIRP through most transducers. With an 83/200 kHz transom-mount transducer, you can achieve medium and high CHIRP. With a 50/200 kHz skimmer, you'll get low and high CHIRP. However, the frequency spread surrounding those numbers will be tighter than with a transducer such as Airmar's B150, which is made to sweep a broader frequency band.

STRUCTUREMAP

StructureMap allows you to see bottom topography in real time and overlays that on a chart, all using Lowrance's StructureScan sonar. As StructureMap builds your unique view, you can mark waypoints or even divide the view by



recording the right side of the boat on one display monitor and the left side of the boat on a second display for different perspectives. StructureMap also records buoys and pilings that might hold fish, and would normally not show on a retail electronic chart.

BOTTOM COLORING

Whether you prefer a white or a blue background on your sounder screen, Lowrance HDS Gen3 units paint the



bottom brown in contrast. The targets appear as red, blue, yellow, orange and green. When you zoom in on the bottom, the contrasting brown color helps better define fish from structure.

TRACK BACK

First to offer this feature, Lowrance allows anglers to scroll back on their touch-screen units to see about 15 to 20 minutes of sounder memory. They can drop a waypoint on a particular fish or bait school, and if they have an autopilot networked into their navigation system, they can



immediately go to the cursor. The feature works on traditional, CHIRP, and StructureScan HD SideScan and DownScan views.

RAYMARINE

FISH-TARGET ENHANCEMENT

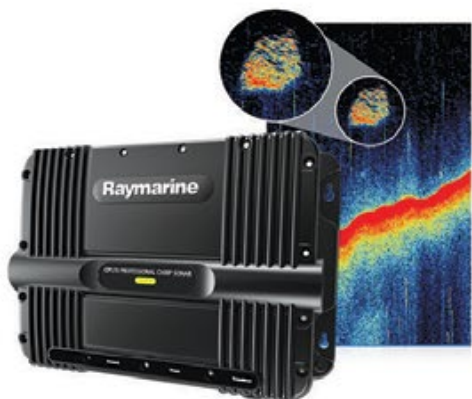
Raymarine's new CP370, CP470 and CP570 black-box sounders are capable of increasing fish-target intensity without amplifying noise. Normally when a captain adjusts the gain, TVG or color gain on his sounder, the noise within the water column amplifies or fades at the same rate as the fish or bait targets.



But by establishing a baseline that continues to run in the background while gain is tweaked, Raymarine can let a captain sharpen targets while keeping the rest of the screen uncluttered.

TRUZOOM

Available in the current CP450 C and in the new CP470 and CP570 CHIRP black-box sounders, TruZoom exploits the fact that CHIRP offers higher-resolution imagery than what a display's LCD panel can show. "The CHIRP sonar signal is high-def, but it's sent to a lower-def screen," says Jim McGowan, Raymarine marketing manager.



"When you want to enlarge an area on the sounder screen for more detail, you zoom in. Most sounders take the pixels and stretch them out. What TruZoom does, it requests more data on that area. So you're not just enlarging the pixels, you're bringing more pixels into the display."

ADJUSTABLE CP200 SIDEVISION TRANSDUCER

Currently unique among side-imaging or -viewing transducers, Raymarine's CP200 twin transducer arrays are adjustable up and down. Saltwater anglers, in particular, can optimize the transducer for deeper or



shallower fishing.

"People think of SideVision as a freshwater or flats thing. But it works very well in deep water," McGowan says. With an adjustable set screw, you can angle the two transducer arrays to point more downward or out to the side.

"Our SideVision can see out to 600 feet in both directions (1,200 foot

total). If you angle the arrays down at their lowest setting (about a 30-degree down angle), you can potentially see about 600 to 700 feet down. You'll have a small blind spot near the surface — you might cut off maybe the first 40 to 50 feet of the water column."

WI-FISH

Wi-Fish takes a small black-box sounder, a transom-mount transducer, and a smartphone and tablet app, and produces sonar for mobile devices. "In addition, everything that you see on the phone or tablet (which is your monitor) is instantly shareable on social media," McGowan says. "You can take screen snapshots and upload them from your boat to your Facebook or Instagram account."



"You can also pause the app and scroll back in your history (about 60 seconds) to get that image you might have missed."

Kayak and micro-skiff fishermen can use Wi-Fish by simply mounting the black box in a storage compartment, and either using a bracket to mount the transducer or cinching it through a scupper on a kayak.

SIMRAD

SCROLL SPEED

Most sounders allow the user to alter scroll speed, but it's a feature few anglers know about or use. In deeper water, the ping rate slows because the sound takes longer to reach the bottom and return, says Matthew Laster, sonar product manager. Speeding up the scroll speed



enlarges the targets on the screen.

"Tuna guys turn up the scroll speed and focus on the upper 300 feet of the water column, and that makes the fish arches really big," Laster says. "Bottom fishermen can turn up the speed and swordfish targets will appear bigger."

TIME-VARIED GAIN

Adjusting the TVG changes the gain throughout the water column. Normal gain modifies gain in the whole water column all the time. TVG starts at the top. The more you dial up TVG, the farther down in the water column the filtering extends.



If you see a lot of noise at the surface, for instance, you can turn up TVG and get rid of some of that, Laster says.

FORWARDSCAN

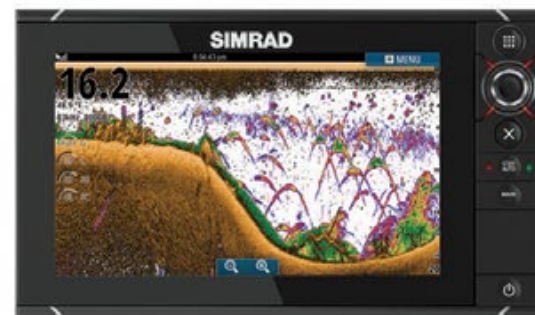
A new feature for Simrad, ForwardScan employs a unique transducer to allow captains to watch the seascape ahead of the boat. Particularly helpful in poorly charted areas such as remote Bahamas or Mexico waters, ForwardScan can keep you off the shoals.



By turning on "data points," captains can also discern bait schools and fish.

DOWNSCAN OVERLAY

Simrad's DownScan technology provides picturelike images of what's below the boat. Units equipped with the technology also allow captains



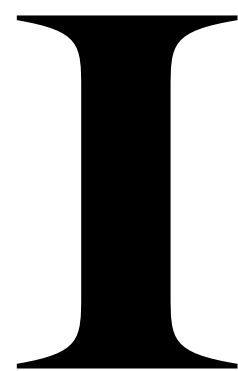
to overlay that view on top of a traditional or CHIRP sounder screen. In most cases, other brands allow only side-by-side or top-and-bottom display of the two views. ☹

CHANNEL ISLANDS BONANZA

CALIFORNIA'S CHANNEL ISLANDS CHAIN IS RICH WITH ANGLING OPPORTUNITIES

BY RON BALLANTI





settled into a steady rhythm of lift, wind on the drop, and lift again, slowly moving the solid fish on the end of my line toward the surface. Tilting my head to one side gave me a clear view of six other anglers up the rail of Ventura Sportfishing's *Pacific Dawn*, their rods bent into heavy arcs. Deckhands stood by to direct traffic, passing rods over and under each other as the fish coaxed anglers up or down the length of the rail.

Somewhere behind me, I heard hoots of excitement as a freshly hooked fish peeled line from another angler's reel. Eventually I worked my quarry close enough for the deckhand to gaff it and hoist it over the rail in one smooth motion, where it joined a quartet of 30-plus-pound fish pounding out a steady drumbeat on the deck.

The Channel Islands includes (closest to most distant) Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, San Miguel and outlier Santa Barbara.

It wasn't yellowfin tuna that had our crew of anglers working up a feverish sweat; it was a full-on blitz of big, mean California halibut.

This type of pulse-raising action is typical on offshore tuna trips, where multiple hookups can keep anglers and crew busy for hours at a stretch. We, however, were in the shadow of San Miguel Island, a wind-beaten outpost in Southern California's chain of Channel Islands. Over the course of a muggy July afternoon, we rigged our dropper-loop rigs with live squid. Every time we drifted over a sweet spot, multiple anglers would get bit at once. As evening approached, we had tallied nearly 60 halibut ranging from 20 to 35 pounds. It was literally more big halibut than I had seen over my lifetime.

EMBARRASSMENT OF RICHES

We were alerted to this hot bite by *Mirage*, a popular charter boat from Channel Islands Sportfishing in Oxnard. We had been enjoying solid action ourselves at neighboring Santa Rosa Island, landing a handful of white seabass in the morning before moving into deeper water to target the area's excellent bottomfishing. That enticing fish report, however, was just too much to resist. So we pulled up stakes and made the one-hour run farther outside to the shallows of San Miguel.

Such is the embarrassment of fishing the riches that the Channel Islands offers to visiting anglers. We broke a cardinal rule of fishing — never leave fish to find fish — and not only did it not cost us, but we struck a true bonanza.

“ WE BROKE A CARDINAL RULE OF FISHING — NEVER LEAVE FISH TO FIND FISH — AND NOT ONLY DID IT NOT COST US, BUT WE STRUCK A TRUE BONANZA.

The Channels Islands is rich in history and natural beauty. The five islands that make up Channel Islands National Park look much as they did when inhabited by the region's Chumash Indians more than 10,000 years ago. The National Park Service and Nature Conservancy have worked for decades to erase damages from 150 years of European settlement and ranching activity, restoring native plants and protecting unique native animals like the housecat-size island fox. The islands boast several important, active archeological sites studying the lives and activities of California's original inhabitants over thousands of years.

I remember with amazement standing on a high, windswept bluff during a naturalist-guided island tour of an ancient Chumash camp, gazing over an expanse of blue ocean toward a neighboring island and the coast beyond. I felt privileged to stand there and absorb a view that, while stunning to me, would have been a daily backdrop for Chumash families going about their lives.

Below: Eight-foot rods, fast reels and braided line represent the preferred gear for fishing the island waters. Right: The Channel Islands is famous for big California halibut. The all-tackle world record 67.3-pounder came from here.



JIM HENDRICKS (LEFT), RON BALLANTI (OPPOSITE)





Five picturesque islands are designated collectively as Channel Islands national park, with numerous marine protected areas around this Southern California archipelago. Shore access to the islands is strictly regulated by the Park Service.

LAY OF THE LAND

Tiny Santa Barbara Island is an outlier of sorts, while Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa and San Miguel islands extend westward in linear fashion from the California coast. The closer-in Anacapa (the only island with a derivative of its original Chumash name, *Anypakh*) and Santa Cruz are visited almost daily by private skiffs and three-quarter-day party boats from the coastal ports of Ventura, Oxnard and Santa Barbara.

During the course of a fishing season, these islands can kick out excellent bites on calico bass, California yellowtail, white seabass, halibut and the ever-present rockfish. Santa Cruz — the largest of California's islands at more than 96 square miles — is known for flurries of white seabass fishing when spawning squid are present.

Generally speaking, however, anglers in search of bigger bottomfish and a shot at trophy halibut and white seabass focus their efforts on the outer Channel Islands: Santa Rosa and San Miguel. Positioned beyond the jutting protection of Point Conception on the California coast, these two islands are exposed to the full surliness of the prevailing northwest wind and swells. Santa Rosa Island is affectionately referred to as Santa "Blowsa" by local anglers. And if the weather at Santa Rosa is acting up, you wouldn't even think of running farther outside to San Miguel. Bad weather can keep boats tied to the dock for days at a time, and it definitely takes a seaworthy craft to make what can be a 50-plus-mile run.

The linear orientation of the island chain does,



however, provide some protection for boats making the trip to the outer islands. Depending on the direction of the weather, it's possible to hide behind the islands for much of the journey. Still, there's no mistaking when you leave the shelter of one island to "shoot the gap," rocking and rolling until you pick up the lee of the next island. Once you reach your destination, the experienced captains who frequent these waters know plenty of places to tuck out of the weather and make the most of whatever fishing conditions they're dealt.

"It can be tough to get out there, but that's also a big

WATCHED WATERS

The Channel Islands might be one of the most monitored and regulated marine environments in California. The five islands are designated as a U.S. national park, and have the additional federal protection of being one of 14 National Marine Sanctuaries managed by NOAA. On top of this, roughly 25 percent of the island's waters fall into a range of different state marine protected areas, where commercial and recreational fishing can be prohibited or restricted to varying degrees. I don't know whether it's because of the MPA closures or despite them, but fishing has been very robust over the past few years. To promote sport fishing in sanctuary waters nationwide (and to dispel the notion that marine sanctuaries are always no-fishing zones), for the past three years the office of National Marine Sanctuaries has supported a summer-long fishing photo contest called the Sanctuary Classic. Visit sanctuaryclassic.org for more info.



“THE OUTER ISLANDS DON’T GET NEARLY AS MUCH FISHING PRESSURE, AND AS A RESULT, THE NUMBERS AND SIZE OF THE FISH CAN BE AMAZING. THE SEABASS FISHING CAN GO OFF FOR WEEKS AT A TIME.

reason why the fishing is so good,” says *Pacific Dawn’s* captain, Pat Cavanaugh. “The outer islands don’t get nearly as much fishing pressure, and as a result, the numbers and size of the fish can be amazing. The seabass fishing can go off for weeks at a time.

“There have been more big California halibut caught over the past few seasons than I can remember in a long time. And the size and quality of the rockfish — particularly the big reds and lingcod — are as good as it gets outside of Alaska,” Cavanaugh adds.

The difficulty factor of reaching the outer islands is a big part of the adventure. You wake up in the morning, climb out on deck clutching your cup of coffee, and wonder what island you’re looking at in the distance. Every day out here is different, and to some extent, where you fish and what you fish for will be dictated by Mother Nature. If you’re lucky enough to get a nice, calm day (they do happen), then you have that many more options to explore.

ROCK BOTTOM

While a wide variety of fish call the islands home, there’s no doubt that rockfish make up

the majority of the year-round catch (excluding California’s annual January/February rockfishing closure). There are dozens of rockfish species in these waters, with colorful names and even more colorful nicknames like vermillion rockfish, called reds, and copper rockfish, most often referred to as chuckleheads. Lingcod, which are not rockfish but a member of the greenling family, are usually included in the mix and considered a prized catch.

These fish and many others are targeted over



Above: White seabass often show up in summer to feed on schools of spawning market squid, with some of the best action taking place in the water surrounding Santa Rosa. **Left:** Tasty vermillion rockfish, known as reds, are one of the most prized species when bottomfishing.

The waters surrounding the Channel Islands harbor lush forests of kelp that attract a wide range of fish, including calico bass, olive rockfish, California sheephead, white seabass and California yellowtail.

rocky structure in depths ranging from 70 to 360 feet — conditions that exist in abundance around the Channel Islands. Here again, the outer islands shine, providing opportunities to target the biggest rockfish and lingcod in shallower waters. This allows for the use of lighter tackle and a variety of artificial lures.

You might call me a rockfish snob, in that I eschew the traditional bait and double dropper loop rig used by the majority of anglers. Instead I almost exclusively fish either heavy metal, single-hook jigs (known as iron) or large plastic swimbaits. The former, which I like to tip with a 6-inch Berkley Gulp curl-tailed grub for added action and scent, is fished by bouncing it up and down with sweeps of the rod, maintaining occasional contact with the bottom.

Capt. David Bacon of the Santa Barbara-based four-pack charter boat *WaveWalker* uses a two-in-one lure of his own creation he named the lingslayer, a heavy, hammered-metal Hopkins spoon with a large lead-head/plastic grub attached to bottom hook. Lingcod have big mouths and big appetites to match — and both of these presentations are designed to provide the aggressive predators with a large-profile entree.

Last season, *Pacific Dawn* relief skipper Mike “Dog” Nickerson showed me how to fish oversize plastic swimbaits designed for targeting big rockfish and lingcod — and if you’ll pardon the pun, I’m hooked. You cast these giant baits as far down-drift as

possible, let them sink to the bottom, and then take about 10 medium-speed winds on the reel. If you’re not bit, you drop it back and do it again. Once you drift over the lure, you can wind it up to the surface and start over. I quickly learned that these active predators often follow your swimbait almost to the surface before slamming it — so keep fishing it right to the boat.

“I’m bit!”

“Damn, he’s off.”

“He’s back again!”

That’s what it sounds like when a group of anglers are up on the bow throwing swimbaits. Lingcod have a way of hanging onto the tail of the lure before engulfing it in their cavernous, tooth-filled jaws. It took some practice for me to resist the natural instinct to stop reeling and set the hook, instead

of just reeling steadily through the bite until the rod loaded up. Once a solid connection is made, grind the fish steadily toward the boat without pumping, and be ready for a few strong runs and violent

CHARTER SERVICES

Here are three charter services that specialize in Channel Islands sport fishing.

Channel Islands Sportfishing
805-382-1612

channelislandssportfishing.com

Ventura Sportfishing
805-676-3474
venturasportfishing.com

WaveWalker Charters
805-895-3273
wavewalker.com





Far left: Capt. David Bacon shows how well his lingslayer jig works at fooling Channel Islands lingcod. Left: Big swimbaits from brands such as Savage Gear, Candy Bar and Kustom Kraft can also produce big lings and rockfish at the islands.

head shakes. In addition to lingcod up to 25 pounds, I've caught my fair share of jackpot-size reds and chuckleheads on these lures as well.

Southern California manufacturers Candy Bar and Kustom Kraft make 7- to 9-inch swimbaits large enough to be fished on 6- or 8-ounce lead heads. Okuma's Savage Gear line includes Cutbait Herring swimbaits rigged on contoured lead heads weighing 8 or 16 ounces. I prefer to fish both jigs and swimbaits on a stout 8-foot graphite rod, paired with a conventional reel capable of holding at least 250 yards of 65-pound-test braid. Ten or 20 feet of 30-pound monofilament leader provides some shock absorption, and makes it easier to break off the inevitable snags.

SEABASS STRATEGIES

While the more southerly islands of Santa Catalina or San Clemente are better known as prime white seabass destinations, Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa islands have delivered sustained early-summer bites over the past several seasons. And while the fish might not be as large on average, the potential for a wide-open bite on 15- to 25-pound fish is more than enough to lure in boatloads of seabass aficionados. And there is always a shot at connecting with a 40- or

50-pound "tanker" to boot.

My very first trip here opened my eyes to the subtle differences in Channel Islands seabass fishing. Instead of fly-lining live squid along the beaches or kelp lines, or drifting over squid nests, fishing is often done on the anchor in deep squid-spawning areas. The current often rips through these waters, and it's not unusual to need 10- or 12-ounce sinkers to keep your offerings near the bottom. Crews who fish here definitely prefer spider-hitch dropper loops over the traditional loop used on rockfish rigs, with a long 18-inch dropper and a long-shank 7/0 Owner Aki Twist hook. When the current isn't too strong, anglers on the stern can fish the middle of the water column by drifting back a squid weighted with just a 1/2- to 1-ounce egg sinker.

It's not unusual to have a flurry of big Pacific barracuda or California yellowtail move through and bend several rods at once while anglers are fishing for seabass in this way. I've also seen plenty of big halibut hit the deck in the middle of a seabass bite. When the captain says it's time to drift for halibut, all I have to do with this versatile rig is adjust the sinker size based on the water depth and speed of the drift.

In a way, this exemplifies what I love about fishing California's Channel Islands. Here, every sunrise is an adventure story whose middle and ending are yet to be written — where you're going to fish, how you're going to fish, and what you're going to catch can change from day to day, or even hour to hour. And if you hit it right, you might just come home with memories of your own Channel Islands bonanza. 🐟

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

A California native, Ron Ballanti enjoys fishing for anything that swims. When he isn't fishing, shooting photos or penning articles, he runs a Los Angeles-based marketing agency specializing in fishing and marine clientele. He's fished far and wide but has a special passion for angling along his home waters off the coast of Southern California.



SAILFISH SECRETS REVEALED

10 TOP CAPTAINS ACROSS THE GLOBE OFFER 30 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

BY SAM HUDSON

ERIC CHENG



Below the surface, sailfish wreck havoc on bait schools in warm oceanic waters. Call them the blue-water wrecking crew; when they show in numbers, expect plenty of knockdowns!

F

VERY ANGLER WHO PLANS TO TARGET SAILFISH IN THE COMING YEAR – WHETHER FROM A PRIVATE BOAT OR CHARTER – CAN LEARN FROM THE PROS. THIS PRIZED SPORT FISH FORCES ANGLERS IN TEMPERATE AND TROPICAL WATERS TO BE ON POINT WHEN SAILS SHOW IN THE SWELLS. TOO MANY SAILFISH TALES ARE FILLED WITH COCKPIT CHAOS, TACKLE SNAFUS, DAMAGED EGOS AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES.

THOSE EXPERIENCES ARE ALL PART OF THE ADDICTION, BUT TO HELP ANGLERS BETTER PREPARE FOR FUTURE BATTLES, I TAPPED THE KNOWLEDGE BASE OF 10 SAILFISH PROS IN DIFFERENT HOT SPOTS ACROSS THREE OCEANS. EACH CAPTAIN EMPLOYS DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES, AND EACH SAILFISHERY IS UNIQUE, BUT MANY OF THE TIPS AND SECRETS THEY OFFER TRANSLATE TO ANY REGION.

IN THIS COMPILATION, I'VE ORGANIZED THE PROS GEOGRAPHICALLY FROM MEXICO EAST TO AUSTRALIA.

Mexico

CAPT. FRANCISCO MUÑOZ TENORIO
BAJA BIG FISH COMPANY
LORETO, BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR
thefishingisgood.com

1 WATER TEMPS MATTER
Study satellite sea-surface temperatures, focusing on early-morning charts covering the 2 a.m.-to-4 a.m. window. Sails want waters at least 75 degree F. While searching for temperature breaks and currents on the water, Muñoz prefers to troll. He trolls weighted 10- to 12-ounce chrome heads that bubble; popular lure color combos for Pacific sailfish include purple-red, and pink-red-white.

2 DRIFT AND SIGHT-FISH
At the same time he's trolling, Muñoz always has at least one rod rigged and ready with a frisky live bait. Then, if he's trolling and sees sailfish at the surface (especially more than one), he'll stop the boat and drift for them. While drifting, he uses the live-bait rod to cast ahead of lit-up sailfish.

3 FOR THE BIRDS
Besides temperature breaks, Muñoz also looks for birds exhibiting specific

behavior. The oceanic waterfowl that most often reveal pelagic fish below is the *tijereta* (frigate bird). Muñoz looks to see if the frigates are cruising, or actually diving and working the water. When he spots diving birds, Muñoz knows they're likely above fish, possibly sailfish.

Guatemala

CAPT. BRAD PHILIPPS
GUATEMALAN BILLFISHING ADVENTURES
MARINA PEZ VELA, GUATEMALA
guatbilladv.com

4 DON'T LEAVE FISH TO FIND FISH
Sailfish often swim with other sails. Philipps sets his lines back in the water as quickly as possible after a hookup. Once a specific area heats up, with anglers getting bit often, he works the area thoroughly. Never leave fish to find fish unless absolutely certain the odds really are better elsewhere, Philipps warns.

5 THE LOCAL NETWORK
Philipps is friendly with other captains and fishermen in his area. He's learned how they entice bites from sailfish and their particular styles of fishing. Most important, he's routinely in contact with his network of friends and tips them off to hot bites he discovers. Those same captains return the favor with vital on-the-water reports when sailfishing is tough.

6 READING THE WATERS
Philipps learns from the fish regularly. Sailfish change their feeding habits from day to day, so he watches for trends. He looks for what they're biting each trip, and adjusts the spread, speed and drop-back accordingly. Understanding this lets him know if the fish are merely not hungry or whether his mates should adjust their presentation.

Frigate birds low to the water's surface often signal baitfish below. Sailfish ball and trap baits when on the attack, attracting both birds and astute anglers.



CHRIS AND MONIQUE FALLOWS (LEFT), CAPT. CHRIS SHEEDER (OPPOSITE)

Guatemala

CAPT. CHRIS SHEEDER
CASA VIEJA LODGE
PUERTO SAN JOSE, GUATEMALA
casaviejalodge.com

7 GOING-AWAY BITE

Sheeder lets aggressive sailfish pass a fly and swim inside its position. With a hot fish, the angler casts to a spot behind the sailfish. Sheeder then directs the mate to flip the teaser inside the boat. Now the angler strips and pops the fly to create surface commotion, causing the hungry sailfish to circle back and strike aggressively.

8 KEEP YOUR ROD LOW

There is no reason to high-stick with a fly rod, says Sheeder. Anglers' hook-sets should be low, so after a possible miss, the fly is still in position for another bite. During the fight, also, anglers should keep the rod low to utilize the backbone in the lower end. Sheeder

“THERE IS NO REASON TO HIGH-STICK WITH A FLY ROD. ANGLERS' HOOK-SETS SHOULD BE LOW, SO AFTER A POSSIBLE MISS, THE FLY IS STILL IN POSITION FOR ANOTHER BITE.”

points out that lifting higher than horizontal is a waste of energy and can cause lower-back pain for fly anglers.

9 HOW TO HANDLE SLACK LINE

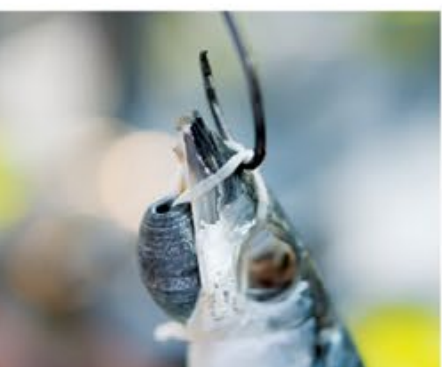
At some point, a hooked sailfish is likely to jump toward Sheeder's boat, *Rum Line*. He doesn't want the slack fly line to wrap around the rod tip, so he directs the angler to stick the rod directly into the ocean. The movement and drag of the water prevents tip wraps and break-offs.

Don't let fly line wrap around the rod's tip when a sailfish jumps. Instead, stick the tip in the water to increase tension on the line.





All hands on deck: Once a sailfish is hooked, other anglers should be ready for a second bite. Double hookups are common. Below: Many Costa Rican crews prefer chin-weighted ballyhoo paired with a circle hook as a top offering.



Costa Rica

CAPT. DAVID MESEN
SEA FLY SPORTFISHING
HERRADURA, PUNTARENAS, COSTA RICA
fishingcostaricaexperts.com

10 FORGET THE SKIRT The most common bait Mesen uses is a small ballyhoo, rigged naked to a circle hook. That means no skirt or lure in front of the bait. He rigs his ballyhoo with a chin weight to swim rather than skip at the water's surface. Mesen warns that anglers get only one chance with a delicate ballyhoo; if they miss a strike, all that's left is the head.

11 BASIC TROLLING Mesen targets sailfish with a simple trolling spread. He uses light trolling gear such as Shimano Tyrnos 30s with Tallus 20- to 30-pound rods. He pulls only four baits — one from each outrigger and two flat lines close to the boat. He prefers the swimming ballyhoo

on the flat lines and skipping baits off the riggers.

12 SUCH A TEASE Mesen believes pulling a dredge — sometimes two if tournament fishing — is a vital component to the spread. The teasers attract increased numbers of sails while he trolls. Mesen's dredges, whether artificial or natural, mimic local bait schools that draw sailfish in numbers. Two electric reels on board handle the dredge duties.

Panama

ALBERT BATTOO
FISHING DIRECTOR, TROPIC STAR LODGE
PIÑAS BAY, PANAMA
tropicstar.com

13 THE PANAMA STRIP Panama's Battoo swears by a bonito's belly as a billfish bait. Better known as a "Panama Strip," the advantages include

WILL DROST (LEFT), CAPT. CHRIS SHEEDER (TOP), PAT FORD (OPPOSITE)



its durability when rigged correctly and ability to skip along the surface or swim just below. Battoo's bonito belly is best rigged with an 8/0 or 9/0 in-line circle hook to 10 to 15 feet of 80- to 130-pound monofilament leader.

14 DON'T RUSH THE HOOKUP Hungry sailfish often take a couple of bill whacks at Battoo's baits to stun the prey. He never drops the line back too early to feed the fish before it inhales the bait. Instead, Battoo makes sure the fish turns away from the boat with the bait before engaging, especially with a circle hook.

15 A PATIENT RELEASE Sailfish become tired after a prolonged fight, so Battoo spends time at boat-side reviving his fish with the boat in forward motion. Some anglers will attempt to lift a sailfish into the boat, but Battoo halts that action. Dragging a sail over the gunwale removes its protective slime coat and might damage it



in other ways, and Battoo takes extra care to release Panama sailfish healthy.

Florida

CAPT. DEAN PANOS
DOUBLE D CHARTERS
NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA
doubledcharters.com

16 A NUMBERS GAME Panos keeps as many baits in the water as possible when kite-fishing, especially after hooking and fighting a fish. When Panos kite-fishes, he typically includes three baits on two kites. Once there's a hookup, other team members concentrate on keeping their baits in the water while the angler is fighting his fish.

17 WHEN TO REPOSITION After a double or triple hookup, Panos suggests moving the boat down the line and in front the pack of sailfish again. In South Florida, the fish are moving south, so

Kite-fishing allows fishermen to present numerous surface baits off each kite. The captain often points the bow upwind to keep the kites flying.

“ HUNGRY SAILFISH OFTEN TAKE MULTIPLE WHACKS AT A BAIT. DON'T DROP THE LINE BACK TOO EARLY TO FEED THE FISH.



Sometimes it's hard to discern whether predators or your own boat disturbed flying fish into fleeing over the water's surface. When flyers head toward the boat, that's a positive sign – chances are game fish are in the area.

Panos motors south a half-mile and sets back up in the same depths. Panos says this technique has worked numerous times in a single trip to stay with the same pack of fish.

18 LIGHT LEADERS Panos uses light, quality fluorocarbon leader. He chooses Sufix 40-pound on most days, dropping to 30-pound on lighter-wind and clear-water days. He prefers fluorocarbon not strictly for its stealth in the water, he says; 40-pound fluoro is also much stronger than comparable 40-pound monofilament leader.

Florida

CAPT. TIM MADDOCK
VITAMIN SEA TOO SAILFISH TEAM
POMPANO BEACH, FLORIDA
vitaminseatooeexperience.com

19 PREP MAKES PERFECT Maddock experiences too much fishing competition in South Florida not to do everything in his team's power to be ready for sailfish opportunities that present themselves on the water. More often than not, it's the sailfish team that makes the most of the bites it gets that wins, he says. If Maddock's team is not averaging 90 to 95 percent hookup rates, his team is not winning the tournament.

20 METICULOUS BAIT KEEPING Maddock's boat must have enough bait – and good, quality bait too. When his team handles bait in and out of cages, it's one at a time. There is nothing worse than a winning fish coming up to a goggle-eye and not giving it a second look, he says. Maddock frequently changes baits; he likes his team to keep things moving, bringing them in and letting them out on the kites.

A spread of lines and rods fished at the same time allows more opportunities to hook up. Below, a sport-fisher backs down on a fish to help the angler take up line.



21 BEFORE THE BITE Most tournaments Maddock fishes have a maximum amount of lines allowed, usually six or seven. His perfect scenario is that every team angler fishes his own rod. If everyone is paying attention to one line, there should never be any surprises, he says. Team anglers should see the fish coming up, or a bait getting nervous, and have ample time to prepare for the strike. Maddock expects to catch every sailfish the team sees.

Tobago

CAPT. GERARD "FROTHY" DE SILVA
HARD PLAY FISHING CHARTERS
TOBAGO, WEST INDIES
hardplay.net

22 PULLING DAISY CHAINS In the early season, when the sails are most abundant, de Silva fishes seven lines and two teasers. Paramount to success, his teasers are daisy chains made up of five Iland lures. A hooked ballyhoo is rigged at the rear. The teasers pull 40 to 50 feet behind the boat; de Silva uses a downrigger ball to keep the chains just under the water's surface.

23 INCORPORATE FLAT LINES De Silva's seven-line spread: Place two flat lines just behind the teasers with chin-rigged ballyhoo on circle hooks. Run two 30-pound-class outfits fitted with ballyhoo on small skirts, skipping at the short corners. Finally, place three ballyhoo baits with J-hooks in the two long outrigger and stinger positions.

24 BRAID BENEFITS De Silva uses braided line on his three longest lines. When free-spooling a sailfish, his braid has less drag in the water. He's noticed that sailfish tend to drop his baits less frequently with braid compared with thicker, more-water-resistant mono. Hollow-core braid spliced to 60 feet of mono gives him better stretch and hookup percentages than straight braid.

Kenya

CAPT. JACKSON SAFARI
HEMINGWAYS WATAMU
WATAMU, KENYA
hemingways-watamu.com

25 FIN ACTION Safari doesn't believe live bait is his best option when sight-fishing for sailfish. He trolls lures when sails are finning or free-jumping near the boat. In Watamu, he sees heavy concentrations of fish, with lots of opportunities for anglers. Instead of sight-casting, he

prefers to troll strip baits or even plastic lures at 7 to 7.5 knots.

26 A BAIT BONANZA
When the sails don't show at the surface, but there are loads of bait around, Safari switches to live-baiting. Normally he catches small frigate mackerel on squid jigs for bait. He rigs the baits to circle hooks and trolls at speeds between 2 and 3 knots. This tactic raises fish successfully when they're not easy to spot, he says.

27 BAIT-AND-SWITCH
Watamu's skippers will troll hookless teasers up to 70 feet behind the boat to attract sailfish to the boat. When a sail starts chasing the teasers, Safari pulls like mad and lures the fish close. He points out that an angler doesn't have to be a fly-fisherman for a successful bait-and-switch; he can cast a rigged dead bait in front of the fish as the teaser is pulled away.

Australia

CAPT. CHRIS NISBET
BROOME BILLFISH CHARTERS
BROOME, WESTERN AUSTRALIA
broomebillfish.com

28 LISTEN TO THE SKIPPER
On *Billistic*, Nisbet adopted a short teaser pattern so close to the boat that anglers often don't see the sailfish at their feet. As a rule, the guy up top at the helm sees all, he says. Anglers who listen to his directions in preparation for a hookup have higher catch ratios than fishermen who don't pay attention.

29 POSITION BAITS CLOSE
Nisbet has an annoying toothy (shark) problem in Broome. After lots of different approaches, he found that winding the lines up to the start of a double section of a standard 20-pound IGFA leader solved his problem and brought sails closer to the boat. Sailfish are not scared away from baits by the proximity of the boat.

30 USE A SPINNING REEL
Nisbet's use of spinning reels has decided advantages and disadvantages. First, it allows anglers to cast to fish or drop back with accuracy. Anglers can place their index finger on the spool with the bail arm open, and extend the outfit to reach most teasers, he says. One disadvantage of spinning gear is the line twist, and Nisbet makes sure to have two outfits ready per angler so a deckhand can straighten lines behind the boat after a hot bite. 🌀





X

MARKS THE SPOT FOR STRIPERS

PUNCH IN ISOLATED WRECK
AND STRUCTURE WAYPOINTS
TO DIAL IN TO BIG BASS

BY CAPT. VINCENT DANIELLO



In my home waters off South Florida, wrecks that barely register a bump on the fish finder regularly produce grouper, amberjack, kingfish, wahoo and even snook — a treasure trove on nearly every trip to exact GPS coordinates, where X marks the spot. Given those experiences, I was surprised to find that few striped bass fishermen focus on artificial structure. Less surprising, the striped bass artificial-structure aficionados I located regularly catch big fish. I consulted three striper pros for their advice on catching wreck bass.



Bunker, as menhaden are known in the Northeast, attract bass. When they're around ocean wrecks, stripers are usually around as well.

ISOLATED STRUCTURE ADVANTAGES

"Some days as quickly as I can put a bunker in the water, I'll get fish on," says Scott Leonard, owner of Top Gun Fishing Charters out of Fire Island, Long Island. His go-to structure is nothing more than a small piece of wreckage that broke off and drifted away from a ship that beached a century ago.

"Other days I'll just pull a few fish — but quality fish," he says, including one tournament-winning 37.9-pounder. "But you know right away if there are fish around." That's because artificial structure is typically isolated, so any bait in the region congregates in one very small area. That concentrates feeding fish and gives anglers an exact target to drop on.

"If I'm fishing a ledge, the fish could be anywhere along a 5- or 6-mile stretch," says Bobby Rice, owner of Reel Deal Charters in Cape Cod. "They're moving with the tide like a wolf pack, looking for bait to ball up and feed on, and they'll keep moving in that direction until the tide changes."

Instead of covering ground to find the bite, he often visits bus-size isolated boulders that glaciers scattered across the bottom millennia ago, which he fishes just like wrecks. "Either the fish are there, in that one spot, or I try another boulder," he says. But it isn't just location; bass behave differently at isolated structure. "You get a few fish behind the rock, out of the current where they're comfortable, waiting for bait to come to them," Rice says. "You'll see the fish on the sonar machine suspended behind this massive boulder. It's challenging. You have to figure out how to position the boat to get the bait to them."

While Rice positions his boat for each drop, Leonard often anchors above his spot. "You don't want to anchor right on top of the wreck," Leonard says. "Stop over the wreck and drift to see which way the current is moving, and then anchor so the current flows your bait into the wreck." But don't anchor too close, he says.

On calm days, Capt. Bobby Rice will sight-cast to stripers using live eels. He throws past the bass to avoid spooking them in such conditions.



Roughly 100 feet is right, give or take a bit depending on water depth and current. "Fish will come off the wreck to eat. You might get hung up two or three times in a day, but most times you'll get a fish before your bait reaches the wreck." If the bite seems slow, Leonard might chunk a bit. "Cut a bunker into maybe 20 little pieces, and use them sparingly," he says, "just to get the scent out."

Other isolated structure doesn't work as well for anchoring. "Inshore of Fire Island Light, there are 30 or 40 wrecks scattered over half a mile," he says of the large concrete structures, scuttled barges, and debris piles intentionally placed a decade ago. "Drift them on an outgoing tide. Try to come down one side or the other, not right over the top. Go maybe 200 feet up-current before you drop, and make sure your bait is on the bottom. The fish might be 50 feet

ERIC MEDENBACH (TOP LEFT), TOM MIGDALSKI (BOTTOM LEFT), TIM SMITH (ABOVE)



up-current, 50 feet behind the wreck, or off to one side,” he says.

Often he finds the largest fish on the periphery and smaller fish directly atop the structure. “I have everything on my Northstar, so I drift from wreck to wreck, maybe bumping the engines to move across the current a bit and set up the drift for each one.” Alternately, he says, “you can drift one piece again and again, but you might pull only a fish or two from each one.”

HOT SPOTS WITHIN HOT SPOTS

What drives fish onto isolated structure? It’s a desert out there, and artificial structure is like an oasis, says Stephen Weitzen, an independent tackle rep based in New York. “It gives the fish safety, shade, prey — everything.” He pulls many large fish — one topping 51 pounds — from

a 500-yard-long section of an old causeway washed into the water by a hurricane 75 years ago. “At low tide it’s about 10 feet deep, with 30 feet [of water] all around it, and a tremendous amount of moving water. When the fish key in on that structure, they’re looking to eat,” he says, which includes a daytime bite when other areas have faded shortly past dawn. “They stack up behind it, but not down in a gully completely

Whether stopping over bus-size boulders or small pieces of wreckage on the bottom, structure is often key to stripers big enough to net.

“ STOP OVER THE WRECK AND DRIFT TO SEE WHICH WAY THE CURRENT IS MOVING, AND THEN ANCHOR SO THE CURRENT FLOWS YOUR BAIT INTO THE WRECK.



Above: A structure bass of trophy proportions accounts for that's-what-I'm-talking-about smiles. Below: When porgies aren't available, small croakers can be good live baits for bass as well.



out of the current, and there are certain spots they like better because of the water flow. Nine times out of 10, they're in one little sweet spot," he says. In fact, one specific location just a few yards wide regularly produces the biggest fish.

"The biggest fish push the smaller ones out of the prime spots," Rice says. He often fishes a 30-foot-deep pocket wedged between a shallow boulder reef and a sheer cliff shoreline, with many huge boulders scattered within. "It's like an aquarium for the stripers. They're out of the swell, and with that much structure, there are plenty of crabs, lobsters and other bait," he says. "We might not get huge numbers, but they're big fish. On calm days, you can see them relaxing, out of the current, waiting for dinner. We throw live eels past them so

we don't spook them, and then retrieve the eels so they stay up near the surface. Some days they don't eat, but most of the time you can watch them suck in that eel."

TIP

When warm water makes fish seem lazy, Leonard chooses the smallest baits in his livewell. "An inch or two can make a huge difference," he says. "In normal water temperature, the bigger the bait, the bigger the fish." If using smaller live bait fails, Leonard might switch away from live bait when wreck fishing. "Cut a bunker into three pieces. Chum with the tail and middle, and then put a hook in the head."

WHEN AND WHERE

"Ocean wrecks tend to be good whenever there are bunker in the area, which means they'll be on the wreck too," Leonard says, but with one caveat. "If the water is dirty from a storm or ocean swell, bass won't stay on the wreck," he says. "They'd be getting beat up by the wave action."

Even in the ocean, fishing often favors one tide. "I like the outgoing tide but try the incoming too," Leonard says, as a few of his spots are consistently better on the flood. "In a strong current, fish tend to be behind the

structure, out of the current. With a light current, they might be out front, but that can be different on any given day," he says. Explore the entire area, particularly when the structure lays on a current break. "Consider a wreck, maybe 75 feet long, right on a rip. On one end I'll get nothing, and on the other end I'll get nothing, but if I come right down the middle, I'll get two fish on every drift," Leonard says. "If I've never fished a spot before, I'll usually start on the outer areas and then work my way in, particularly if it's along a rip line. The smaller fish tend to be in the middle of a rip, and bigger fish stay out a bit, where there is less current."

Temperature also plays into Leonard's strategy. "The wreck near the beach is good in June and July, and again in September, but the water is too hot there in August," he says. When water is warm, a deeper wreck might be ideal. "The temperature might be 70 degrees on the surface but a few degrees cooler 60 or 65 feet down."

CURRENT, WEIGHT, RIGS AND BAIT

Leonard generally won't fish a wreck without current. "If you're not using lead, live bunker stay on top, but if you put lead on, they go straight into the wreck," he says.

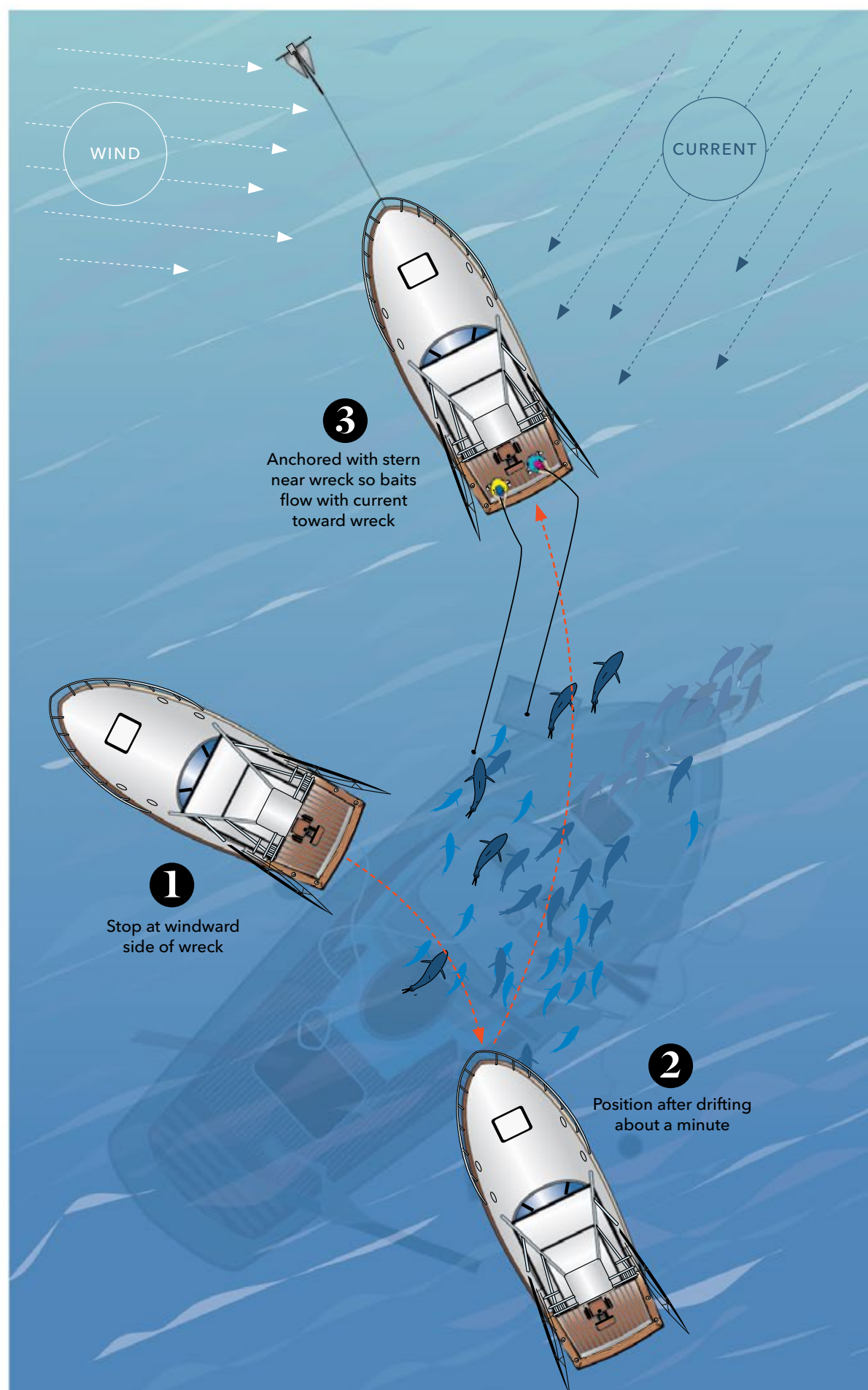
He's looking for the combination of current speed and lead — typically 2 ounces in moderate current — that allows him to control his baits' drift toward the wreck. Leonard's typical rig, wherever he fishes — inshore or offshore, wreck or reef — is an 8-foot leader of smoke-colored mono. He attaches it to his 20-pound mono main line via a banana-shaped drail lead, which he finds will snag the bottom less often than egg sinkers. Whether Leonard is fishing on reef or wreck, he prefers a drift between 2.5 and 3.2 knots. "The fish tend to bite more aggressively," he says. "Too slow a drift, and you'll snag the bottom more."

The deep pool Rice fishes is largely out of the current. "You're really trying to fish midwater, not right on the bottom," Rice says. "A live eel will go straight down, without weight," he says, so he casts them out and controls depth with his retrieve. "If an eel stays on the surface, you know there are fish down there. When that happens, I add a little weight, maybe a 3/8-ounce rubber core."

When he's fishing on big boulders, Rice uses

about 12 feet of 50-pound leader, which better handles abrasion and protects his 50-pound braid main line versus the shorter 20-pound mono leader he employs in open water. He also

FIND THE PERFECT ANCHOR POSITION



Determining how a boat will lay once on the hook is critical to successfully fish a wreck or other structure. In No. 1 above, the skipper stops just windward of the wreck. He drifts to see where the wind-current vector will take the boat (to No. 2). Then, with that in mind, he motors up to position the anchor at No. 3, adjusting scope so the stern is 100 feet up-current (or farther in deep water or heavy currents).

**Capt. Scott Leonard
plays angler here, as
Dean Morace nets a
striper. In mid- to late
summer, Leonard often
looks for wrecks farther
out, in deeper waters.**





increases his drag correspondingly to 15 pounds while fishing rocks versus 7 pounds drag in open water. “They know those rocks offer safety,” he says. “You’ve got to be quick, keep their heads up, and position the boat around the side of the rock they’re trying to run behind.”

Weitzen often prefers live porgy for bait. “Bunker stay on the surface. As soon as porgies hit the water, they go right for the bottom,” he says, which allows him to drift atop the washed-out causeway without lead, typically using 6 feet of 40-pound fluorocarbon leader. Whenever fishing near any pronounced structure, Weitzen comes tight on circle hooks quickly. “As soon as you feel the line accelerate, you know the fish ate the bait, and you can lock up.” On particularly problematic days, he says, “switch to J-hooks, and set the hook even quicker,” which equates to less line in the water for fewer snags. His choice of 40-pound braid also allows less line in the water than equivalent mono to hold the bottom.

LIKELY SPOTS TO LOOK

“Anywhere with deep, moving water and some kind of structure to hold bait and let fish get out of the current — that’s a good spot to put in some time,” Rice says.

Leonard looks for any isolated structure. “A

bridge is a lot like a wreck,” he says. “Anchor 100 feet up-current, and flow your bait back toward the structure. If you’re not getting bites right away, you can throw a few chunks of butterfish.”

“Fishing artificial structure is really not that different from any striped bass fishing,” Weitzen says. “It’s all structure driven, all about how the water flows across that structure.” Perhaps one unspoken advantage to wrecks is that they allow fishermen to experiment and learn the nuances of one small spot.

A drawback to wrecks is that once fished, a spot might remain dry for a few days. Maybe that’s why they aren’t mentioned much during dockside striped bass discussions. Buddies readily share numbers for ledges where fish could be anywhere within a mile or two from the waypoint, but friendship has its limits. When X marks one spot that consistently produces big fish, that’s a treasure most guys keep secret. 🐟

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Capt. Vincent Daniello grew up fishing and diving off South Florida. He has run charters and private boats from Canada through the Caribbean. Now based in New Hampshire, he writes and shoots photos for boating and fishing magazines, and is a frequent contributor to Sport Fishing.

Above: Although blitzes aren’t necessarily associated with structure, it pays to be on the lookout for them. Below: Leonard prefers banana or kidney sinkers, which are less likely to snag bottom than are egg sinkers.

“ ANYWHERE WITH DEEP, MOVING WATER AND SOME KIND OF STRUCTURE TO HOLD BAIT AND LET FISH GET OUT OF THE CURRENT — THAT’S A GOOD SPOT TO PUT IN SOME TIME.



FISHING MACHINES FISH TRIAL NEW BOATS & GEAR BETTER BOATING BOAT TIPS

SF BOATS

MAY 2015 / VOL 30 — ISSUE 5



FISHING MACHINES 76

HYDRASPORTS CUSTOM

Inshore to offshore: HydraSports Custom builds everything from this 23-foot bay boat to its new, history-making 53-foot center-console — the 5300 Sueños.

INSIDE:



Fish Trial:
Barker 26 Calibogue Bay

80



New Boats & Gear:
Metal Shark 25 Gravois

84



Better Boating:
Livewell Lessons

86



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BY CHRIS WOODWARD

SHALLOWEST-WATER BAY BOATS

Defining the Proper Equation for a Buoyant Hull That Handles Chop

ACCORDING TO INTERNET LORE, Bill Kenner designed the very first bay boat in his Arkansas-based Kenner Boats factory. And while I can't find reports detailing when this happened, I do know that the bay-boat concept — a hybrid of flats-skiff and modified-V center-console design — really caught fire in the early 2000s.

"People realized how versatile bay boats were, and manufacturers started adding features and flair, which changed them from work boats to boats that people were proud to own," says Charlie Johnson, director of marketing for Maverick Boats, which makes the Pathfinder bay-boat brand.

The lightest flats skiffs float in as little as 6 inches of water. Bay-boat drafts start at 10 inches. To better explore this design, learn more about draft, and look at the shallowest of these vessels, I contacted five builders whose bay boats (22 feet and up) draw 12 inches or less. Here are their perspectives. (Boats are listed by LOA.)

HYDRASPORTS CUSTOM 23 BAY BOLT



Even shallow-draft bay boats can offer great storage. The Bay Bolt's 8-foot-10-inch beam gives it lots of usable deck space.

president. "In order to get on plane, a few more inches of water are required."

Bay boats like this HydraSports — which feature deeper transom deadrise angles than skiffs — generally run outboards with 25-inch rather than 20-inch shafts. That weight — plus greater fuel and livewell capacity, coupled with additional fiberglass and laminate for the increased length — deepens the draft.

"The poling skiff is more like a motorcycle, specifically light and built for one or two passengers. It runs a smaller V-4 outboard and carries one, maybe two batteries," Leva says. "Bay boats are more like SUVs. They're intentionally multipurpose."

Leva says the Bay Bolt's nearly 9-foot beam creates more displacement, helping it to float higher than many other bay boats on the market.



SPECS: LOA: 22 ft. 11 in. • BEAM: 8 ft. 10 in.
DRAFT: 11½ in. • DEADRISE: 14 deg. • WEIGHT: 2,600 lb.

First things first: How draft is measured can differ among boatbuilders, although most use a combination of mathematics and on-water testing. HydraSports measured an 11½-inch draft on the 23 Bay Bolt under these conditions:

1. Loaded with one person, fishing gear, five batteries, 50 gallons of fuel, a PowerPole shallow-water anchor and

a bow-mount trolling motor.

2. The engine was raised on the jack plate and tilted about halfway forward.

HydraSports took the boat to a sandbar so the deepest part of the hull brushed the bottom, and then measured the water depth.

"This is a floating measurement," says Alex Leva, HydraSports Custom

PATHFINDER 2400 TRS



SPECS: LOA: 23 ft. 11 in. • BEAM: 8 ft. 6 in. • DRAFT: 12 in.
DEADRISE: 15 deg. • WEIGHT: 3,050 lb. (w/ Yamaha F300)

Maverick Boats' Charlie Johnson says Pathfinders are designed to have a specific draft based on typical fishing conditions. "By that we mean loaded and balanced with two anglers and gear on board, with the engine trimmed up, as when fishing with a trolling motor,"

he says. "All that said, any boat's draft numbers can vary depending on load and weight distribution."

Pathfinder's naval architect uses an algorithm to draw up the hull, given a standard fishing load and the most likely engine package. "We've found

our architect's draft numbers to be very accurate by taking the boats with a balanced and standard load, and getting them as shallow as we can," Johnson says. "When the boat bumps bottom, we push it off the spot and measure the depth. We've found that's the only true way to measure draft."

Deeper-V hulls ride better than flat hulls; narrower boats also run more comfortably than beamier ones. But both of those traits increase draft — as does weight. Finding the sweet spot among all those characteristics and designing in proper balance offers the best compromise. That skill falls to the architect.

So, could a boatbuilder design a bay boat to float in 6 inches of water? "I think it's more a matter if it would make sense to do that," he says. "You can't fish in water that shallow with a trolling motor down anyways. So unless you're just drifting — which is a really tough way to chase fish when they get super skinny — you would need to be using a push pole. At that point, the most effective tool for the job would be a technical poling skiff."

ROBALO R246 CAYMAN

Robalo first measures draft in a test tank from waterline to keel, and then verifies it in shallow-water fishing conditions. The fully rigged boat is tested with its engine trimmed up or with a jack plate and trim in combination.

"Weight can have an effect on the draft of a bay boat, if it's not designed properly," says Joe Pegg, Robalo regional sales manager. "Many competitors with dated hull designs sacrifice material to accomplish a shallow draft. Robalo's goal with the Cayman series was to design a shallow-water boat that's built to the same heavy-duty standards of offshore hulls."

Pegg says Robalo achieved its goal without skimping on materials because of its extended V-plane hull



SPECS: LOA: 24 ft. 6 in. • BEAM: 9 ft. • DRAFT: 12 in.
DEADRISE: 16 deg. • WEIGHT: 3,700 lb. (w/ Yamaha F150)

design. "We extended the running surface more than 2 feet past the transom, which adds flotation and stability to the hull," he says. "This allows for planing in shallow water by reducing bow rise and transom dig."

This design allows anglers to use less tab to stay on plane at slower speeds for

cruising the shallows in search of fish. Pegg says the extended V-plane also improves midrange efficiency.

The company integrated Kevlar to add strength without much weight, and designed a 9-foot beam, which keeps the boat floating higher and gives it a more big-boat feel, Pegg says.

YELLOWFIN 24 CARBON ELITE

Brand new to Yellowfin's stable is the Carbon Elite version of the company's popular 24-foot bay boat. The unique carbon-fiber weave was specifically engineered for this hull. By combining 100 percent vinylester resin and resin infusion, Yellowfin reduced the weight of its original bay boat by 25 percent, resulting in shallower draft, better fuel economy and a faster top end, the company says.

Yellowfin owner Wylie Nagler says formulas can be used to calculate draft, but Yellowfin prefers to float the boat and bottom it out (with engine up).

"If the hull is a good design, and the center of gravity is correct, then the weight shouldn't really matter," Nagler says. "We experience the same ride with our standard bay-boat hull. We



SPECS: LOA: 24 ft. 10 in. • BEAM: 8 ft. 6 in.
DRAFT: 12 in. • DEADRISE: 15 deg. • WEIGHT: 2,400 lb.

pick up speed with the lighter hull."

The Carbon Elite does cost more because of the materials. But customers asked for this version, and Yellowfin opted to push the technology envelope.

To make this vessel float any shallower would mean making the

bottom of the hull flatter to displace the weight of this bigger platform (bigger than a skiff), Nagler says. "However, then it would not run everywhere a bay boat can run, as far as rough conditions are concerned. So then it's really no longer a true bay boat."

SEA BORN FX25

As with other boatbuilders, Sea Born draft-tests its boats with a realistic load and the engine trimmed up. Techs measure the distance from the keel to the bottom in two locations: in the factory

test tank and in a local lake.

Since both locations feature fresh water, the draft measured is actually 3.33 percent greater than it would be in buoyant salt water, says Wally Bell, Sea Born president. So the final number reflects a little more math. The calculations are then checked against hydrostatics generated from the computer-assisted design software.

Bell says Sea Born reduces the weight of the boat by choosing the optimal fabrics, which lowers the resin load. "For example, standard 24-ounce woven roving has a resin load of about 60 percent," he says. "Through the use of biaxial-stitch mat, the resin load can be reduced by 8 percent. But the trade-off here is an increase in the overall cost."

On all bay or center-console boats, Sea Born uses a combination of woven roving, biaxial-stitch mats, and engineered deck cores that vary in density. "In addition, we've utilized embedded aluminum plates for the higher load areas," Bell says. "The final goal is obvious: to build boats that balance weight savings against the cost drivers."

With regard to ultimately building an even shallower, 6-inch-draft bay boat, Bell says, "I have [built one]. The problem: A bay boat with a 7-degree or less deadrise would have to be built from expensive fabrics. The result would be a very rough-running, lightweight boat with a hefty price tag. Based on that, such an offering would be unattractive to most buyers." Ⓢ



SPECS: LOA: 24 ft. 11 in. • BEAM: 8 ft. 9 in.
DRAFT: 11 in. • DEADRISE: 17 deg. • WEIGHT: 2,600 lb.

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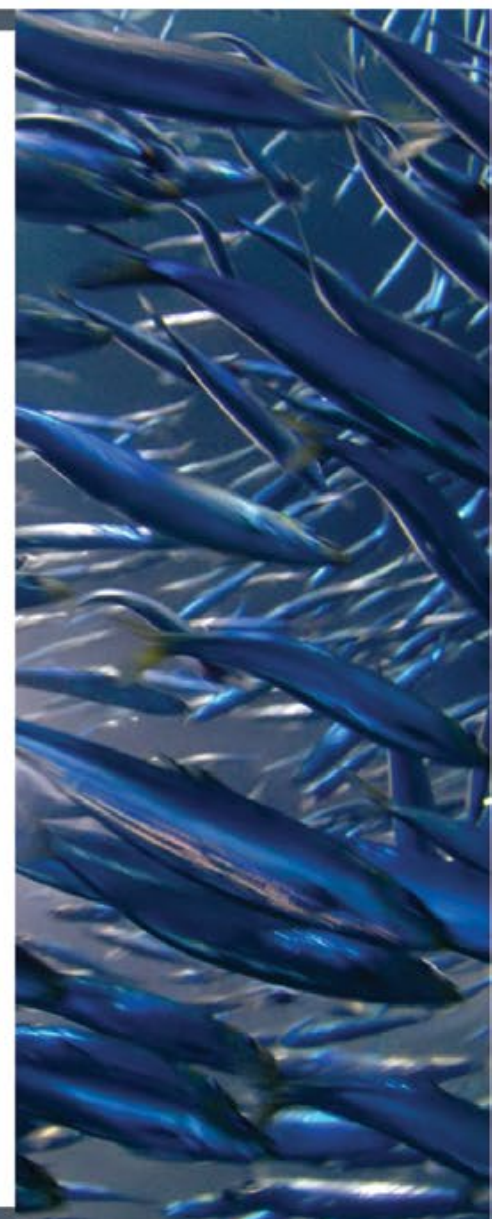
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BY JIM HENDRICKS

BARKER 26 CALIBOGUE BAY

Combining Thoughtful Design with Quality Fit and Finish



A late-February morning of fishing off Sarasota, Florida, aboard the new 26 Calibogue Bay from Barker Boatworks turned from relaxed to raucous when a powerful fish exploded on a topwater lure I was working along the shallow edge of a channel.

“That fish has girth!” exclaimed Todd Koehler, who had showed Kevin Barker (owner of Barker Boatworks) and me this part of Sarasota Bay known as Buttonwood.

“Looks like a big snook to me,” Koehler observed, as the fish burned line off the light spinning reel and then began a series of violent head shakes. Unfortunately, that’s when it ended. My heart sank when the fish sliced through the perfection loop above the MirrOlure Top Dog, leaving me disappointed but far from finished. “Snook have no teeth, but those gill plates, they’re as sharp as razors,” Koehler reminded me.

This episode proved to be just the start of two hours of fast-paced action that gave me a very good idea of what it feels like to fish aboard the first model to emerge from newly formed Sarasota-based Barker Boatworks.

The Calibogue (pronounced “cal-uh-BOH-gee”) Bay is named after a body of water along South Carolina’s coast in Beaufort County, just

inside Hilton Head Island, where Barker grew up and cut his teeth on boating and fishing.

After spending nine years with one of the most respected boat manufacturers in the industry, Barker set out on his own about a year ago. Unassuming and soft spoken, on this trip Barker let his premier model — a 25½-foot bay boat with a Michael Peters-designed twin-stepped hull — speak for itself.



Top: Barker Boatworks’ 26 Calibogue Bay features a Michael Peters-designed twin-stepped hull that performs superbly. **Right:** Barker offers a custom AmeraTrail trailer to fit the boat’s hull.

COURTESY BARKER BOATWORKS (TOP), JIM HENDRICKS (4)

PERFORMANCE

POWER Single Mercury 300 Verado Pro
LOAD 45 gal. fuel, three crew, fishing tackle, safety gear
TOP SPEED 61.2 mph @ 6,200 rpm
TIME TO 30 MPH 8.3 sec.
BEST MPG 3.49 @ 29.3 mph (3,500 rpm)

HULL

LOA 25 ft. 6 in.
BEAM 9 ft. 3 in.
DEADRISE 18 deg.
WEIGHT 4,250 lb. (with power)
DRAFT 1 ft. 4 in. (motor up)
FUEL 90 gal.
MAX POWER 400 hp

PRICE AS TESTED \$128,000 w/ Mercury 300 Verado Pro and AmeraTrail trailer

BARKER BOATWORKS
 Sarasota, Florida
 941-232-8646
 barkerboatworks.com

CRUISING COMFORT

Our morning began at sunrise from the launch ramp at Centennial Park. Barker piloted the Calibogue, powered by a Mercury 300 Verado Pro, northward across Sarasota Bay to an area known as Long Bar, where Koehler and Barker planned to target redfish on the incoming tide.

With air temps in the low 50s, the run felt a bit chilly, though the flaring bow kept us completely dry. Rather than stand in the wind, I opened the backrest to the two-person bench seat that tucks into the aft casting deck and kicked back, seated below the wind. “I wish airline seats were this comfortable,” I shouted to Barker, who turned back and smiled.

As we came off-plane at Long Bar, I nosed around and found a surprising number of additional creature comforts. The thickly padded two-man helm seat has a comfy backrest, while two tiers of angled footrests on the console let you brace yourself whether resting your fanny or using the seat as a leaning post. Barker built in storage below the seat and arranged six angled rod holders across the back of the black powder-coated aluminum frame.

The front of the console hinges upward on a pair of stainless-steel gas-assist struts to reveal a step-down head compartment with enough room

for an adult to change into a bathing suit. There’s a full fiberglass liner and an EVA-foam nonskid sole. My test boat also came equipped with the new Thetford Porta-Potti Curve portable marine toilet.

“Having the privacy of a step-down head compartment is a huge selling point with families,” said Barker. “It’s one feature that sets the Calibogue Bay apart from other, similar-size bay boats.” The watertight console interior also features cabinets that provide access to the helm rigging.

WIDE-OPEN SPACES

With the engine tilted up and a draft of 14 to 16 inches, the Calibogue Bay drifted across surprisingly shallow water. The bow will easily accept the installation of a trolling motor.

Measuring 92 inches wide and 69 inches down the centerline, the elevated forward casting deck offered

gobs of room for Barker and Koehler to cast side by side. A 2-inch-high toe rail offers a measure of safety.

Under the 12-inch-high foredeck is one massive locker, accessible via three locking hatches, all supported by stainless-steel gas-assist struts. We used this locker for lifejackets, backpacks and camera cases. On each side are four tubes for stowing fishing rods. The sole sports EVA-foam nonskid, as do the sides for protecting reels from scratches. There’s dedicated space underneath for three 31-series batteries to power the trolling motor.

Barker takes a different approach to sealing deck hatches. Instead of installing a relatively thin gasket around the hatch rim, he covers the entire underside of the hatch with closed-cell EVA foam. Not only does this form a seal when the hatch is battened with a compression latch, but it also serves as sound insulation.

Making these hatches even more



Clockwise from left: The Calibogue Bay’s forward casting deck is spacious enough for two anglers to fish without getting in each other’s way. You can access the huge bow locker via one of three locking deck hatches. The step up to the forward deck accommodates three five-gallon buckets and a cast net.





Much like a Russian nesting doll, the aft deck opens to become a comfy seat; the seat lifts out to reveal a storage box; and the box can be removed to access the bilge rigging.

watertight are deep gutters around the rims with stainless-steel-screened scuppers drain collectively to a through-hull fitting in trim-tab pockets.

The forward casting deck also includes a 15-gallon livewell with a thick, clear acrylic lid on friction hinges (no struts to snag a cast net) and an anchor locker in the forepeak with a nest to secure an 18-pound SeaClaw anchor. A pair of gunwale rod holders flanking the anchor locker lets you conveniently stow a rod while you handle the anchor or tie on a new lure. A bow pullup cleat lets you easily tie off the rode.

A step up to the forward casting deck contains a locker that accommodates a trio of five-gallon buckets, as well as a cast net and other gear. Just below and abaft this resides a 50-gallon in-sole macerated fish box that can be converted to a livewell.

While Barker and Koehler fished from the bow, I took up my station on

the 15-inch-high aft casting deck, which measures 94 inches wide and 39 inches down the centerline. Barker chose to eliminate the splashwell, instead placing the engine on a Bob's Machine Shop jack plate, giving the outboard some setback and allowing the boat to traverse shallow water more easily.

This also provides extra deck and locker space. Where you might normally find a splashwell, there is a 45-gallon livewell. Like the forward well, it features a thick acrylic hatch with friction hinges. A pair of 20-gallon insulated below-deck fish lockers flanks the aft casting platform.



Right: The 31-inch-wide helm panel will accept displays as large as Garmin's GMM 190 19-inch monitor. Below: The stepped hull exhibits outstanding directional stability during high-speed maneuvers.



QUALITY AND INNOVATION

Being a big aficionado of quality fit and finish, I admired the cabinetry work on the 26 Calibogue Bay. Instead of off-the-shelf hatches for tilt-out cabinets along the gunwale, for instance, Barker has custom-crafted acrylic cabinets. The same holds true of the cabinets inside the console.

There's also innovation. The foldout bench seat, for example, is more than just a place to rest. Like a Russian nesting doll, the seat bottom lifts up to reveal a dry-storage box underneath for dock lines and fenders. Lift out that box to access the fully lined bilge compartment, pumps, fuel filter and other rigging.

The tide was not flooding with sufficient volume at Long Bar to bring the redfish in to feed, and so after 20 minutes of casting, we stowed our fishing rods in the six vertical holders along each side of the console. I asked to take the helm.

As I advanced the Mercury digital-throttle-and-shift lever, the boat lifted nicely and displayed very little bow rise. I've been on other stepped hulls designed by Michael Peters, and they display the same favorable launch characteristics.

I also tried some hard-over turns, knowing that some stepped hulls can be unpredictable during lateral acceleration, sometimes tripping on a chine and swapping ends. Not so with the Calibogue Bay. It exhibited outstanding directional stability at speed.

The Mercury power-assist steering offered superb control of the big, torquey outboard. My boat also featured prototype steering-column control paddles from Uflex for the jack plate and outboard trim. The Edson

stainless-steel steering wheel had an assist knob with a textured nylon insert and finger contours — a practical and very classy touch.

This Calibogue Bay was equipped with Czone digital switching for all accessories. The switch panel also included LED readouts to monitor the voltage of the engine and house batteries, as well as the combined voltage of the trolling-motor batteries.

Using the Garmin GMM 190 19-inch monitor with chart plotting and sonar, flush-mounted in the 31-inch-wide helm panel, I ran a course southward to the Buttonwood area of Sarasota Bay — one of Koehler's go-to spots.

Soon after we arrived, I hooked that big snook, and you know how that ended. Yet we also hooked — and landed — plenty of other fish, including snapper, bluefish, Spanish mackerel and lots of ladyfish, while also holding out hope for a shot at a redfish or another big snook. Barker deployed the twin 10-foot PowerPole shallow-water anchors to hold us in position once we found a concentration of fish.

In the course of the action, I noted that the 16-inch-wide walkways beside

“AFTER TWO HOURS OF NONSTOP ANGLING ACTION, I WAS CONVINCED THIS BOAT IS GREAT FOR CATCHING FISH. IT WAS ALSO COMFORTABLE AND EASY TO DRIVE.”

the console offered plenty of room to follow a fish along the gunwales, which ranged in height from 16 inches in front of the aft platform to 20 inches just abaft the forward elevated deck. Upholstered coaming bolsters encircle the main deck. In calm conditions and with decent balance, you can walk along the 11-inch-wide covering boards.

BUILT TO ORDER

As the morning wore on, the weather got as hot as the fishing, prompting me to ask Barker about a T-top for the boat. “We offer that as an option,” he said. “Based on the response to this model at boat shows, I believe that about half of the buyers are ordering tops.”

Of note is that Barker Boatworks sells direct, with each boat built to

order, allowing the buyer to customize the craft to his particular wants and needs. One customer, for example, might want the shade of a T-top, while another might prefer to avoid any interference with backcasts.

After two hours of nonstop angling action, I was convinced this boat is great for catching fish. It was also comfortable and easy to drive. Yet, what kind of performance can you expect from this stepped hull? To find out, we quit fishing and prepared to run.

With the 300 Verado turning a Mercury 21-inch-pitch Revolution 4 stainless-steel propeller and carrying 45 gallons of fuel, the 4,250-pound boat jumped on plane in 5.8 seconds, cresting 30 mph in 8.3 seconds, en route to a top speed of 61.2 mph at 6,200 rpm. At wide-open throttle, the outboard burned 30 gallons per hour, resulting in 2.04 mpg.

The most economical cruise speed proved to be at 3,500 rpm and 29.3 mph, with a burn rate of 8.4 gallons per hour for 3.49 mpg, and a maximum cruising range of 314 miles based on the 90-gallon fuel capacity. You can push the speed up to 38.5 mph at 4,000 without much of a penalty in fuel economy — the burn rate is 11.2 gallons per hour for 3.44 mpg. If you want to slow down in rough seas, the boat will plane at speeds as low as 14 mph.

It is clear that Kevin Barker has poured his heart, soul, and years of fishing and boatbuilding experience into one of the most well-thought-out and well-built bay boats on the market today. If this is the way he builds his first one, I can't wait to see what comes next. 🎣



Kevin Barker (left) and Todd Koehler gave the new Calibogue Bay a workout, hooking a wide range of inshore game fish, including bluefish, snook and Spanish mackerel. This boat also lets you venture offshore on nice days to fish for cobia, grouper, kingfish and more.



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METAL SHARK 25 GRAVOIS BY CHRIS WOODWARD

METAL SHARK, a Louisiana-based boatbuilder that normally designs vessels for military and commercial use, has introduced a fully welded, stepped-hull 25-foot bay boat. The 25 Gravois is made from digitally cut plates of military-grade aluminum alloy, and its running surface — an

“aggressively stepped, ventilated, deep-V tunnel hull” — was designed by well-known marine architect Michael Peters. Metal Shark also filled the hull with foam to deaden sound.

The Gravois comes standard with trim tabs, two 35-gallon transom livewells, six gunwale rod holders and

horizontal storage for four sticks. More holders can be added with an optional T-top. Anglers can choose either a bow casting deck or bow seating, and the transom can be outfitted with a dive door and fold-away seating.

Power options include Evinrude, Honda, Mercury, Yamaha or Suzuki single outboards from 250 to 350 hp.

Metal Shark employed military-spec details throughout the Gravois — from the uniform wiring inside the console with pre-wired service loops to precision-welded hatches featuring dog-down latches and hefty gaskets. The 3,380-pound hull comes with a 90-gallon fuel tank.



SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	25 ft.
BEAM	8 ft. 6 in.
DRAFT	15 in.
MAX HP	350
MSRP	\$78,645
(with Mercury 250 Verado)	

YAMAHA 190 FSH BY CHRIS WOODWARD

YAMAHA EXPANDED ITS lineup of jet-powered boats early this year with the 190 FSH center-console fish boat. The 1.8-liter high-output engine and driveline for the 190 reside in the hull beneath the leaning post, creating a full 360-degree open cockpit and deck.

Particularly unique is the unobstructed transom area. A two-tiered swim platform affords plenty of room for casting a net or a lure. The helm area features a leaning post and backrest (on the Deluxe and Sport models), with room beneath for a cooler. Starboard of the leaning post is an 18-gallon livewell.

On either side of the center console,

Yamaha attached three vertical rod holders. Four more holders lie beneath the gunwales, and four flush-mount holders are set along the sides of the aft deck. Yamaha also included stowage for a five-gallon bucket, two large compartments in the bow

casting deck, and room beneath the forward-console seat for gear.

Like all Yamaha boats, the 190 FSH comes with a clean-out port that allows for the removal of debris from the jet pump without having to get into the water or swim under the boat.



SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	19 ft. 2 in.
BEAM	8 ft.
DRAFT	16 in.
FUEL	30 gal.
MSRP	\$27,999
(base starting price)	



MERCURY VERADO 350

Mercury's new supercharged, in-line six-cylinder **Verado 350**, which debuted in February, is now the most powerful outboard in its model family. Mercury says the 350, which operates on 89-octane gas (though 91 octane is recommended for full performance), provides up to 10 percent greater fuel economy than competitors. At 668 pounds, this Verado weighs 95 pounds less than the nearest four-stroke competitor, the company says. The 350 features a cold-air-intake system designed to collect air from outside the cowl and deliver it to the supercharger. Other attributes include the top cowl's labyrinth design that keeps the powerhead dry, and a styled vented flywheel cover that facilitates engine-heat dissipation. The Verado 350, which comes in Phantom Black, Cold Fusion White or Warm Fusion White, costs \$27,505 to \$29,725.

SEASTAR SOLUTIONS EPS

Power steering dramatically changes the way a boat handles, and has become almost a must-have for today's most powerful outboards. **SeaStar Solutions**, which makes systems for twin- and triple-outboard-powered boats, now offers its **Optimus electronic power steering (EPS)** for single- and quad-powered boats. The brains reside in the Pump Control Module and in the system's "smart" hydraulic cylinders. The electronic helm (pictured) takes input and converts steering-wheel rotation to electronic signals that travel on a CanBUS network to the control module, which drives the hydraulic pumps. Pricing for the custom installations will vary, but the single-engine system should cost about \$4,300 plus labor.



ELECTRONIC HELM

OCEANLED PRO SERIES HD ALLURE LIGHTS

OceanLED has unveiled premier additions to its Pro Series bronze lights with the **HD Allure 50XFM** and **150XFM**. These new underwater lights offer the latest in LED technology, which allows them to run at maximum brightness with minimal heat. The lights feature 3,000 to 6,500 fixture lumens, brightness that's equivalent to 50 W and 150 W HID/metal halides. The Allures feature an aluminum-bronze housing, fit flush, and are exchangeable from inside the hull using a simple plug-and-play system. Allure 50XFM (\$1,499) and 150 XFM (\$1,999) HDs are available in ultrawhite and midnight blue colors.



VOLVO PENTA FORWARD DRIVE

Volvo Penta's innovative new **Forward Drive (FWD)** employs forward-facing dual counterrotating props with an adjustable-trim drive – a system that pulls the boat through the water rather than pushing it. Volvo Penta says this new stern-drive propulsion system delivers responsiveness, acceleration, fuel economy and versatility. Boaters can also customize the wake for fishing or water sports. FWD reduces noise and vibration, and can be tilted to allow for trailering. The forward-facing Duoprop system also introduces a safety factor for divers or swimmers, since the blades operate well beneath the hull. Available in 1.95-, 2.14-, and 2.32-to-1 gear ratios, FWD will be available on new boat models this year (not for retrofit).





I've learned — many by trial and error — for selecting and installing a livewell pump.

[1] Use a Centrifugal Pump.

Today, centrifugal pumps from brands such as Jabsco/Rule, Johnson and SHURflo are about the only types you'll find in new saltwater fishing boats. That's because these pumps introduce water more gently and naturally than do displacement or diaphragm pumps, which jet or pulsate in a manner that seems to have an unsettling effect on live bait. Also, most centrifugal pumps are quieter, some almost silent when running, which I appreciate during a long day on the water.

[2] Choose the Correct Capacity.

You want a pump with the capacity to replace the livewell water at least every 10 minutes (six times each hour). So if you have a 100-gallon livewell, you need to deliver 600 gallons per hour (100 gallons x 6 times per hour = 600 gph). You also need to account for the drop in pressure as the pump lifts water from the bilge to the livewell. For example, lifting water 40 inches reduces the delivery volume (versus no lift) by about 30 percent. So if you must raise the water 40 inches from intake to well, a 600 gph pump delivers only about 420 gph. A better choice in this case would be an 1,100 gph pump, such as a Rule Tournament Series 1100 or SHURflo Piranha 1100 (about \$53 for either). Both would deliver roughly 770 gph to the livewell with 40 inches of lift. Err on the side of more capacity than you need, then "valve it down," as outlined in tip No. 6.

[3] Mount It Below the Water-line. Unlike a displacement pump, a centrifugal pump is



BY JIM HENDRICKS



SHURflo's Bait Sentry livewell pumps feature magnetic impeller drives that resist clogging from weeds and other debris.



Johnson pumps have quick-fit replacement motors; no need to disconnect any hoses to get it fixed if the motor burns out.



Rule's Tournament Series 1600 with a bronze base is designed to thread tightly onto the stem of seacock without cracking.

BAIT PUMP-LOGY

10 WAYS TO OPTIMIZE YOUR LIVEWELL PUMP

A livewell pump is like the water heater in your house. You don't think about it much until it stops working and ruins your day. Then you wonder how to fix it quickly.

If you're like me, when a bait pump goes bad, you tend to swap it out for the same model, and that's not a bad way to go, especially if you liked the way the old pump worked. Yet if you weren't exactly pleased with the performance of the old pump, it might be time to

re-evaluate your choice.

Livewell pump systems in today's better-brand fish boats perform well — so well you hardly think about them. Yet in older boats, I've seen a fair number of problems. My boat, a 1986 center-console, came with a self-priming displacement pump. It wasn't until that pump failed and I replaced it with a centrifugal pump that I realized the boat came with the wrong pump. The centrifugal model made the bait much happier.

Based on my 35 years of fishing with live bait and rigging boats, I offer 10 tips

not self-priming. To function properly, centrifugal models must be mounted below the waterline with the boat at rest. In the earlier example of my 1986 center-console, had I mounted the centrifugal pump where the old displacement pump had been, the new pump would not have worked. This might sound elementary, but I have seen a number of centrifugal pumps mounted too high in the bilge, leaving boat owners scratching their heads as to why the livewell won't fill.

[4] Install an Intake Strainer. Through-hull bronze intake strainers (about \$130) from companies such as Groco mount on the bottom of the boat to help keep debris such as weeds from clogging the pump impeller. These have a scoop shape that faces forward to help deliver water to the pump while underway. Water intakes on stepped hulls are usually positioned in front of the first step to minimize the amount of air and maximize the amount of water fed to the pump. Avoid mounting the intake in front of a transducer, as it can create interference in the form of aeration over the face of the transducer. Also, if you trailer your boat, avoid installing the intake where it will interfere with trailer bunks or rollers.

[5] Use a Seacock for Safety. Seacocks — heavy-duty ball valves attached to through-hull fittings — serve a critical safety function with any pump installed below the waterline, allowing you to quickly shut down a leak. Whether the livewell pump is mounted independently, in a pump box or on the valve stem, make sure there's a seacock between it and the hull interior.

[6] Valve It Downstream. Placing a ball valve downstream of the pump gives you the option of reducing the delivery volume. This can be handy if, for example, you have a pump that delivers more water than you really need, as too much flow can harm delicate bait species such as pilchards. As with a seacock, a valve on the other side of the

Live-bait species such as threadfin and pilchards stress out from too much water pressure. Use a valve downstream of the pump to control the flow.



Installing a flow sensor/alarm will immediately alert you to a pump failure, giving you time to save your bait by transferring it to a secondary well.

pump is also a safety feature, allowing you to stem a leak downstream. I prefer bronze or stainless-steel ball valves. Double-clamp all hose fittings on the hose barbs.

[7] Point the Outlet Upward. If you mount the pump horizontally, it's important to position the outlet upward. This will help prevent air from getting trapped and creating an airlock. Some pumps allow you to adjust the angle of the outlet fitting for this very reason.

[8] Install a Pump Box. High-performance fishing machines can get airborne, allowing the pump to ingest air, lose prime or develop an airlock, which will kill bait. A pump box is the best solution. Offshore Bait Solutions offers boxes with a single intake and bilge pumps inside (such as Rule 1500s), bronze plumbing, air-vent

fittings and removable clear-acrylic lids. Bilge pumps work here because they use the same motors and impellers as in centrifugal livewell pumps. Yet instead of being connected directly to an intake, these pumps pick up the clean water from inside the flooded pump box, just as they might pick up dirty water from the bilge, but instead deliver the water to the livewell. The boxes secure inside the bilge below the waterline, as level and as far aft as possible. Prices start at around \$406 for a two-pump box.

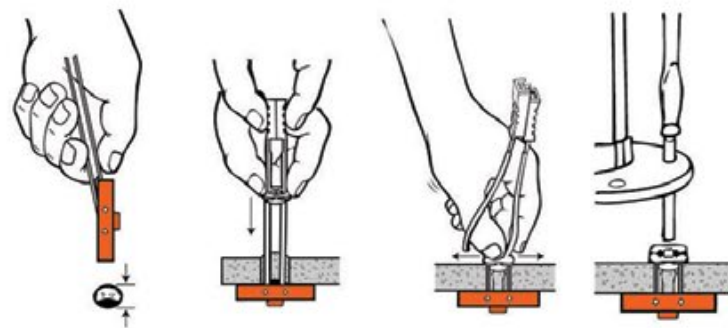
[9] Use a Flow Sensor/Alarm. At some point, your livewell pump will fail you — either from wear and tear, a poor electrical connection, or clogging debris. A flow sensor/alarm such as the Baitwatch from Signet Marine (about \$195) alerts you immediately to the lack of water flowing to the livewell, hopefully giving you time to save your bait by transferring to a secondary well or pen while you fix the problem. It's better than discovering a tank of dead bait after you've run 30 miles offshore.

[10] Consult a Specialist. If you don't consider yourself a do-it-yourselfer, find a shop or rigger in your area that has experience with livewells to advise and install the best pump and system components for your boat. The livewell pump might not be something you think about often, but an experienced shop deals with bait pump-ology all the time. ☺



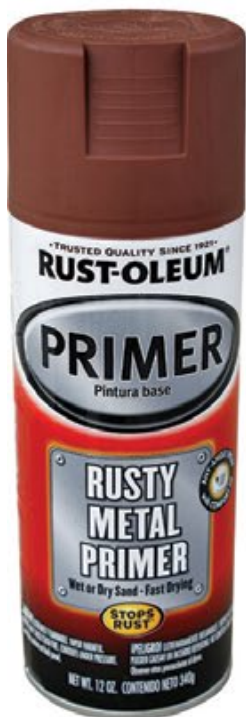
ACCESS ISSUE? TOGGLE IT

IT'S ALWAYS BETTER to through-bolt marine accessories such as grab rails and rod holders, but bulkheads, decks and rail caps with no access from behind pose a problem. One solution is the stainless-steel Garelick Toggler toggle-bolt anchors (about \$34 for a pack of six). Push the toggle into the mounting hole, pull it back up flat against the inner wall with the two nylon arms, then slide the retaining collar down, and snip off what remains above deck. Now you can thread the bolt into the hole and the threaded toggle. Garelick stainless-steel toggles are designed to fit ¼-inch 20-threads-per-inch bolts. — **Jim Hendricks**



RUST ABATEMENT

A GALVANIZED BOAT TRAILER will succumb to rust after years of repeated dunking in salt water. Aluminum-frame trailers are not immune either, as most have galvanized-steel components like the axles. Yet you can slow down rust's unrelenting march by treating spots of corrosion with a couple of coats of rust-inhibiting spray paint such as Rust-Oleum Rusty Metal Primer (about \$4 for a 12-ounce can). Remove any loose rust with a metal brush, lightly sand and then clean with denatured alcohol. Chemicals in the ruddy-colored primer bond with the corroded surface and seal it to help keep rust from running rampant. Give the area a final coat of silver spray paint for a finished look.



HATCH SEALS

IF YOU HAVE AN OLDER BOAT with worn-out hatch seals, you can easily replace them. The best bet is to contact the boatbuilder to see if the company sells replacement seals. If not, Taco Marine offers a variety of widths and profiles in closed-cell foam with peel-and-stick adhesive backing (about \$25 for a 10-foot roll of ¾-inch-wide seal). Once you find a matching seal, scrape off the old seal and clean up any residual adhesive with denatured alcohol. Apply the new seal in 8- to 10-inch sections; avoid stretching the foam. Miter the seal at 45-degree angles around corners and secure each joint with a dab of cyanoacrylate glue (aka Super Glue).

Taco Marine offers 10-foot rolls of closed-cell foam with adhesive backing to replace old, worn-out hatch seals on your boat.

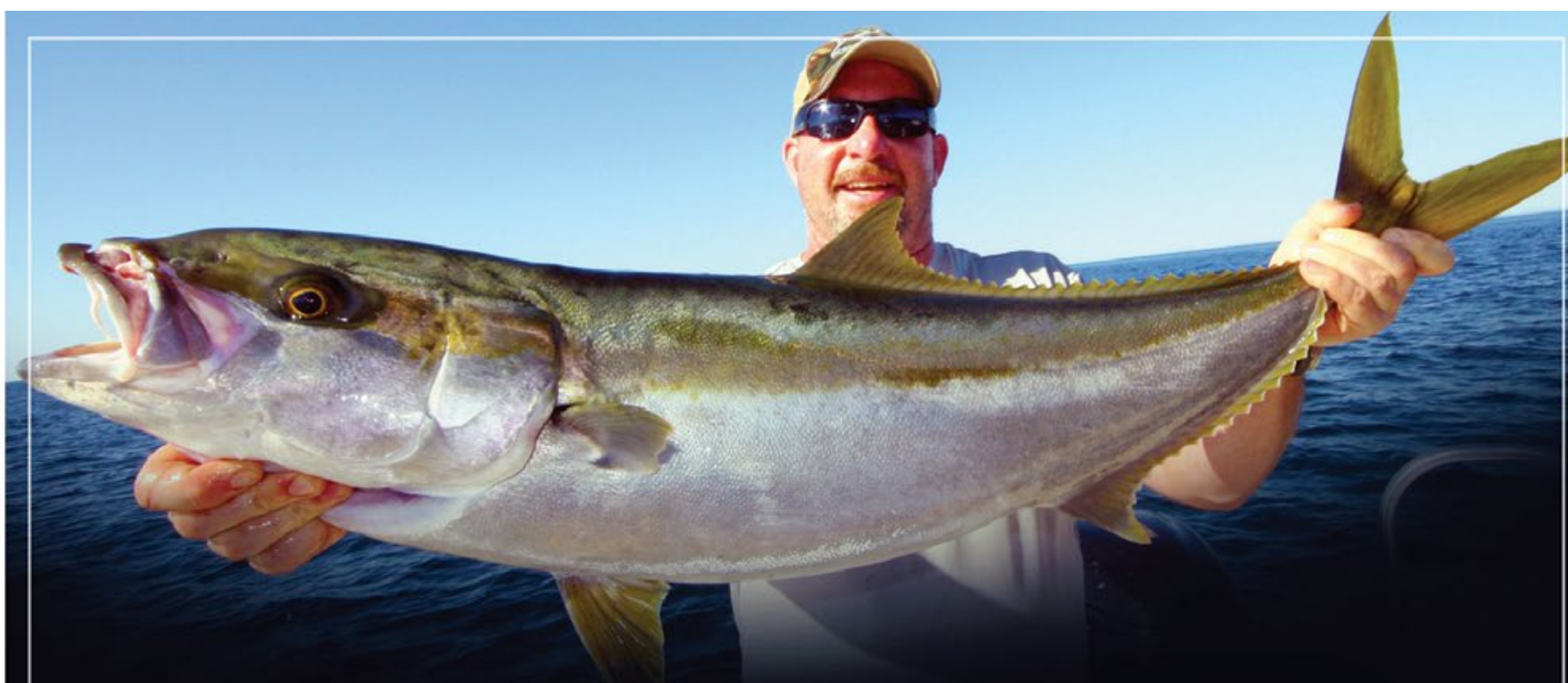


WATERTIGHT CONNECTIONS

ON DIY ELECTRICAL PROJECTS on your boat, make sure that wire connections resist moisture and corrosion by using marine-grade crimp-on terminal rings with heat-shrink collars, as well as marine-grade wire. Ancor Marine offers a wide selection of crimp connectors to fit various wire sizes and terminal studs. Add an extra measure of

protection by covering the collar of the crimp-on terminal with a section of heat-shrink tubing. Avoid using an open flame for activating the heat-shrink components. A heat gun is much safer, but be careful where you place the gun. The nozzle grows exceedingly hot in use and can sear you or your vinyl upholstery in an instant.





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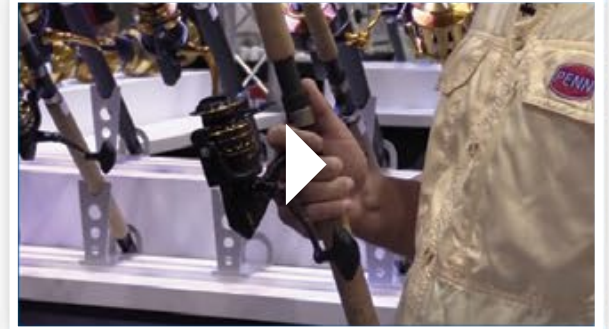
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- Rod Length: 7' - 1pc.



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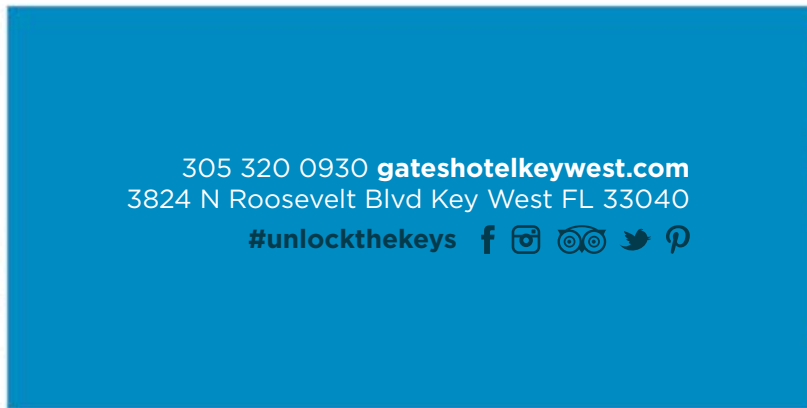
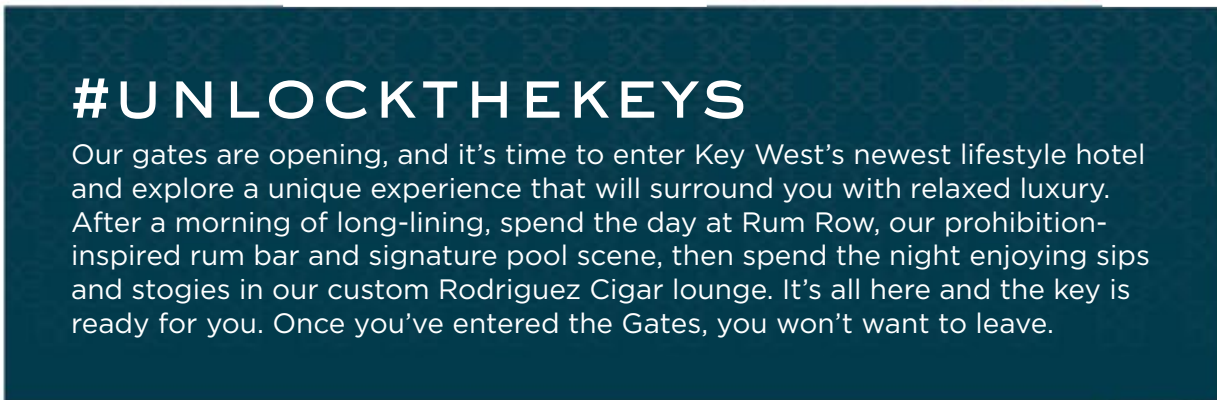
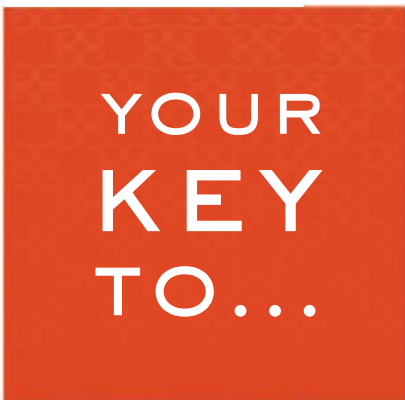
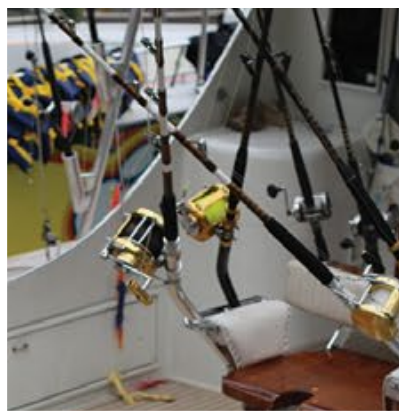


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